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# AMERICANS ALL

*A HUMAN STUDY OF AMERICA'S  
CITIZENS FROM EUROPE*

BY  
WILLIAM SEABROOK



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## *Author's Note*

ALL THE CHARACTERS AND PLACES IN THIS BOOK ARE REAL. IT IS A FACT PICTURE of real people, named by their real names—and I confidently hope they'll all forgive me.







## Preface

A BOOK IS OCCASIONALLY MISUNDERSTOOD OR MISAPPRaised AS SOMETHING it never had any intention of being. This one is not intended to be a statistical immigration treatise, and still less a controversial polemic. Nor has it any pretension towards being a technical work on sociology, politics, or economics. It pretends to show in common, close-up, personal, human terms what kind of "people" Americans of foreign-language origin are to-day, what they contribute to the American scene, how they live in the land of their adoption, how they are viewed and treated there.

I am writing about a numerically enormous element in the population of the United States—certainly thirty million and maybe forty million people, including babies, grandfathers, and grown-ups now renamed Jones and Kelly. In a non-statistical, human-interest picture such as this intends to be the actual number of *foreign-born* immigrant American citizens, already close to fifteen million, is a mere nucleus for the vast, incomputable total who retain traces of their foreign-language origin.

All the Johns, Jakes, Tonys, Mikes, Joes, Olafs, and Evas are real people, named by their real names, and will perhaps cast more light on the picture than the various celebrities. It is all straight reporting, plus

occasional obvious opinions of my own, and if I have had any objective other than honest reporting it has been to shed a little light on whether or not these groups are actually a menace, as some highly vocal patriots believe. When I intrude a little into the field of political experts and propagandists it is only in relation to whether or not the recently foreign element in America's population is a menace, or antagonistic, to America's present basic form of government and social fabric. Where I mention my own sincere belief that the American is as good a basic form of government and social fabric as has yet been tried—or *imagined by honest Utopians*—I do it neither as a member of any privileged class nor as a professional political commentator, but simply as an average working American, neither rich nor poor, who likes his own country the best, and hopes it will survive as a free democracy.

If I have presented any conclusion it is merely a general one that the "menace" is nothing for anybody to sit up nights worrying about. If my reporting seems consequently on the optimistic side it is because what I saw and heard led me sincerely to believe that the American Melting Pot—despite the fact that it bubbles, emits steam, and occasionally has to be skimmed of scum—is producing a good, sound, healthy conglomerate.

W. S.

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## I. *Native American Home Town :* *1938 Model*

UNDER THE SPREADING HORSE-CHESTNUT TREE OUR RHINEBECK VILLAGE SMITHY stands—and the smith is a large Russian Jew named Janow.

We're an old, pre-Revolutionary town in Dutchess County—conservative, mostly native American stock for more than a century—and talk as much as anybody about “these foreigners,” so you might be able to guess how we treat Morris Janow—except that the way we actually treat him doesn't make any sense at all in the context.

“Hey, Morrie, are you coming to the meeting of the grange to-night?” “Say, Morrie, have you got your tickets yet to the firemen's ball?” “Look, Morrie, be sure and tell Abie there's an American Legion meeting Monday!”

Morrie goes rabbit-hunting with us; his partner, Abie Gazen, takes part in amateur theatricals, and last year Morrie's daughter Rosalind was valedictorian at the high school. In other words, we take Morrie and Abie completely for granted. They've been here for a long time. I was the stranger when I bought a house five years ago with some acres and a barn, including old scythes and a lawn-mower which I took to their shop to be sharpened. It had never occurred to me

until I started planning to do a book about "these foreigners" that here were two of them right under my nose.

The fact that another one named Sal Alabiso is all round my nose every couple of days with his razor, and on my neck every couple of weeks with his clippers, might more easily have been overlooked, because what can be more native American now, in this or any other town outside the Deep South, than an Italian barber? It seems to me that Rhinebeck is more completely normal, native, 1938 American, rather than less so, in having Sal Alabiso for a barber, Sam Fichera shoemaker, Cecil Murkoff tailor, and its principal lunch-wagon, the "Rhinebeck Diner," run by Tony Djinis, who is a Greek. Our one men's outfitter is, of course, named Jake Borowsky, and the only thing I can think of that would make us more "native" American would be a Chinese laundryman—which we lack.

And here was the puzzling problem at the outset of this projected book: we take Sal, Sam, Morrie, Abie, Cecil, Jake, and Tony absolutely for granted, and have for years, yet go right on talking occasionally about "these damned foreigners."

Sal said the other day when he was shaving me, "Bill, I bet you don'ta remember the Italian word for 'foreigner.'"

I said, "Yes, by God, I do remember, but I hadn't thought about it for years. It's *forestiere*—man from the forest. Must have once meant almost the same thing as a bandit who lived in a cave, a man with a

club who'd come out of the woods at night and bump you off."

Sal said, "Forest is deepa shadow, like at night. You're afraid of what can't see, what you don't know."

"So what we mean is damned foreigners we don't know?"

"Sure!" said Sal. "What else? You don't mean me and Jake!"

I'd been wondering just what we did mean, and wondered whether Sal hadn't hit on something. Maybe "foreigner" in any language was too much used as an amorphous ghost-word for a menacing shadow-concept which broke down when individuals turned out merely to be "people"—became necessarily "neighbours" after they had lived in your neighbourhood awhile: good, bad, indifferent neighbours, depending on their nature as human beings rather than on their lands of origin.

Here in Rhinebeck we certainly don't mean Sal, or Sam Fichera, or Scandinavian Clyde Swendsen and Arvie Johnson, who farm respectively in Fox and Milan Hollows; we don't mean German Gemmel, who runs the filling-station, or Lutz, who keeps a boarding-house; nor do we mean our own local Slavs, Russians, or Jews. We brag about Polish John Labotsky's asparagus, play pinochle with Cecil Murkoff and terrible bridge with Jake, who is as integrally "Rhinebeck" as the Dutch Reformed church steeple. Fichera's son Mike went through college, and is now a teller in the Rhinebeck National Bank. Sal Alabiso's little Antonetta has a pet spaniel named Queenie, which all the



children play with, gets invited to the other children's parties, and has parts in the school plays. Cecil Murkoff's kid Norman has a red wagon, and if you kick it over you'll have all the tough Yankee kids in the neighbourhood on your neck, because Norman belongs to the "gang."

Tony's "Diner" has neon lights, marble tables, long glass counter, beer licence, cigarette slot-machine, a "baseball game" slot-machine, electric gramophone and radio, so that it's a sort of club. We all go there and get called by our first names, except Old Man Judson, who is President of the Rhinebeck First National Bank next door, and is liked as well as anybody, but always called "Mr Judson." Tony is called "Tony," also "Tony the Greek," and sometimes just "the Greek." He still speaks with a Greek accent, and anybody who looked at him would know he's a Greek. The same is true of his good-looking, dumpy, dark-haired little wife. They both came from the village of Agiasos, in the island of Lesbos. The point is that their four children, Bill, Marcella, Charlie, and Constantine, while pure Greek by blood, are American by birth and environment, little Rhinebeckers who go to public school, speak with no accent at all, unless it's an Eastern New York State accent, and are as completely ignorant of Greek as any Harvard graduate who specialized in the classics.

Another informal "community centre" is Jake Borowsky's stove in winter and the bench outside his store in summer-time. Around them, depending on the season, stop, gather, and gab Motor-cycle Cop O'Brien;

occasional state troopers; the Reverend Edward Travers, now Rector of Vincent Astor's church, but who used to be Chaplain of the U.S. Military Academy down at West Point; Father Gill, our local priest; Ed Tewksbury, our town supervisor; Doc Bulkeley, President of our Board of Health; our Mayor, Ralph Wheeler; other notables and town characters of equally obvious English-language origin. I've told you we're an old native American town. George Washington's sword was forged in our county. And it's a native American gathering around Jake's bench or stove, but Sal Alabiso, Cecil, Morrie, and Abie, the Swendsens and Olesons—"Hello, Jake!" "Hello, you big Swede!"—drop in regularly too, including a very foreign Spanish Rhinebecker named Rivera, who comes on crutches because he got smashed up with shrapnel at Château-Thierry. Occasionally we play pinochle, discuss the stock market, and the price of eggs, or Greta Garbo, but mostly we argue about politics, the New Deal, or what's left of it, and what "that fellow" down at Hyde Park (when he isn't in Washington) is going to do next. Dutchess County loves to argue and quarrel about that, because Mr Roosevelt is our neighbour, and there's plenty to argue and quarrel about, since most of us are violently Republican here—and some of us even more violently Democratic. Anglo-Saxons, Swedes, Italians, Poles, Russians, Jews, and Germans, we argue, fight, and kid each other about *American* politics. Around Jake's bench and stove we don't give a damn about Stalin or Hitler and Mussolini. Maybe we should, but we don't. As a matter of

fact, we've got one Communist in Rhinebeck. He put up a red flag last Memorial Day, and what happened? What happened was that O'Brien simply went and took it down, and told his wife she "ought to know better than to let him do that." He's a good bit like our village atheist used to be when I was a kid. We sometimes say, "Oh, yes, we've got a Communist!" the way the guides in the Adirondacks say, "Oh, yes, we've got bears," but we don't bother to hate him any more than the mountaineer hates his bears. And we never think of trapping or shooting him.

One reason we accept and absorb our "foreigners" as "neighbours" in this particular township, and make good or bad Republicans or Democrats out of all of them, is that obviously we are a rural, non-industrial community. We have literally no factories. Our principal products are fruit, milk, farm produce, and violets. We are an agricultural town in an agricultural county. Another reason is that foreign-born residents compose only 15 per cent. of our total population. We are not overcrowded by them, or by ourselves or anybody. We have room to turn round, breathe, and shoot a rabbit. Our hardware stores, hard-liquor stores, banks, general grocers, and meat-markets are owned and run by Yankees, which in Rhinebeck means pre-Revolutionary English-German-Dutch, and always will be. Most of the fruit and dairy farms, and market gardens too. Our Polish, Italian, Scandinavian, and more recent German farm groups are small and scattered. Take my own back farm road where I raise berries and try to write books. I was asking Ma Kilmer

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the other day, who is as American as her own old straw hat and apron, or the flag, or Abe Lincoln's braces, how many foreigners lived up our road here.

"You mean who talk different from what we do? . . . Well, then, you don't mean Mis' Collado, who lives in behind Aunt Jo's. She married an Italian, or was it a Spaniard who's dead now, but she was born in Rhinebeck, an' has always talked the same as us.

"There's Lutz—of course, he don't talk like us—an' Paul Mertlik, who caught that mud-turtle a while back, and Rivera, who don't farm no more, in the flat . . . an'—oh, yes, of course—there's Sandy McGregor, who raises pheasants. . . ."

"But, God Almighty, he's Scotch," I said. "Don't you know Sandy's a Scotchman?"

"Well, what of it?" said Ma Kilmer. "You asked me. He talks more furrin than anybody else up our road."

"Well, I guess he does at that," I said. "I must have been thinking of something else."

"Like you always are," snapped Ma Kilmer. "What about them people that raises turkeys?"

"I'd forgotten about them," I admitted.

"Like you always do," said Ma Kilmer. "You'd forgit your head if it wasn't fastened to you."

"Well, thanks anyway," I said. "Come on, let's drive out an' see Judith."

"You kin see her all right for five miles with them clothes she wears! I never seen such colours on anybody except the fortune-teller at the fair."

So we went out to see Judith Grushovetz and her

husband, John—who used to be Ivan. They are White Russian peasants with the biggest turkey farm in this district, out towards Red Hook. Judith, in bright-coloured garments, engaged in carnage like her Biblical namesake, stood in boots among the dead and waved her bloody knife in welcome. On a hillside in the twilight moved, like sheep, a flock of three thousand living turkeys, guarded by a hired man with a shotgun, already lighting his lantern. Three dogs helped herd and drive the turkeys, which were going to roost. They roost in the open. The dogs protect them from skunks and weasels, and the shotgun, with its left barrel loaded with rock-salt, is to protect them also from thieves, who might always turn out to be somebody you know.

“Bang, right into the leg!” explained Judith.

“You comin’ over to the Wurtemberg church supper?” asked Ma Kilmer.

“Yes,” said the bright, bloodstained Russian Judith, “I try to go every year.”

Judith and John are Greek Orthodox, like all White Russians, while Ma Kilmer is Lutheran, but church suppers in these parts are social rather than religious functions, and even Jake Borowsky is frequently among those present.

One night I was also present at a turkey supper given by the Ladies’ Aid Society of the Hillside M. E. Church. These dear ladies were as pure “American Gothic” as any Grant Wood painting, and most of their great-great-grandmothers lie beneath moss-grown tablets on this and other hillsides in the Rhinebeck

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township. Pure American Gothic, native New York State as the apples they auctioned in baskets after supper—except for one who was pure Italian Quattrocento, *Ora a Giotto il grido*, mamma, papa, and the baby stepped right out of a Florentine fresco, and at home here, calling people by their first names, in this old New World church across the ocean. She was a beautiful Italian mother, with two kids who ran round playing with the rest while she helped auction quarts of ice-cream left over from the church festival.

“Ed Tewksbury’ll take those two cartons, Annie,” said she to our neighbour, Mrs Annie Traver, who was head of the committee.

“Who’s she?” I asked Mrs Traver.

“Why, that’s Germaine—Germaine Varrichio, who runs the Old Oaken Bucket gas-station down the road. You know her husband, John, over there, talking to the men by the door. I thought everybody knew Germaine.”

Apparently everybody did. At least all the American Gothic ladies did, for though most of them were mothers and some were grandmothers, they were “Flo,” “Grace,” “Lillian,” “Nellie” to Mrs Varrichio, who was “Germaine” to them.

And among the girls who had helped wait at the long tables was Genie, pure Danish on her mamma’s side, from a local filling-station with a beer licence; a cast-iron Viking with shiny sword and winged helmet stands on the stove, and generally a couple of flesh-and-blood Vikings in sweaters or overalls stand at the bar.

It was after the evening at Hillside M. E. Church that

I began to wonder whether Rhinebeck was unusual in the casual way it accepted and absorbed foreigners, or whether the whole American scene had changed in the lifetime I had spent mostly in New York City and abroad. I mean, things weren't anything like that at church suppers in Westminster, Maryland, or in Abilene, Kansas, either, when I was a kid a generation ago. In those days an Italian was a dago or a wop, a Greek was a Greek, and a Scandinavian, no matter where he came from, was a "dumb Swede." They were "those foreigners," and we never thought of them as being "Westminster people" no matter how long they lived there. Yet we were a non-industrial, agricultural township too, with no labour problems or overcrowding. I began to wonder whether maybe the War had changed things somewhat, with a lot of "those foreigners" enlisting, and being drafted under the American flag, and being our buddies in trenches, shell-holes, transports, camps, hospitals, and graves beneath wooden crosses. For all we know, our Unknown Soldier may have been "a guy who couldn't talk good English." I also wondered whether the depression, despite the radicalism and labour agitations it inevitably fomented, had also indirectly contributed to a speeding up of the Melting Pot process. When wolves and storms, whether literal or economic, start woofing round a structure in which some people live who don't know each other very well and don't think they like each other very well, they sometimes get to know and like each other better.

Something, at any rate, it seemed to me, had happened, if it hadn't always existed, here in Dutchess

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County, to make it different in its attitude towards foreigners from the way Carroll County, Maryland, was in my childhood. Maybe, of course, it had always been different here in Rhinebeck. Our farmers and townspeople have always been a conglomerate, though an Anglo-Saxon conglomerate if you let Saxon stand loosely for Germanic—solid English-German-Dutch settlers who came in mostly prior to 1776.

Our historically outstanding families, our so-called "River families," our local aristocracy, which is as old and authentic as any in America, has not only been a similar conglomerate from the time of the earliest land grants, but continues to-day to intermarry with "these foreigners" with a frequency that causes this cream, so to speak, in our present-day Melting Pot to be worth mentioning. The Livingstons, Montgomerys, Suckleys, Mortons, were originally English. The Roosevelts, Kips, Schuylers, Vanderbilts, were Holland Dutch. John Jacob Astor was German. The Zabriskies are Polish with a name you read in the same school history with Pulaski's. And the Delanos are probably Venetian or Genoese, if you go back enough centuries, like the Cabots of Boston, who only speak to God.<sup>1</sup>

To-day, like the folks listed in the *Almanach de Gotha*, they generally continue to marry—either foreigners or each other. The only difference is that they almost never marry Mrs Simpson. Everybody else is everybody else's cousin on the Rhinebeck

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, the original Delanos were a Flemish-French family whose knightly ancestors repose in the cathedral crypt at Ghent.



"River," where historic neighbouring estates slope down to the lordly Hudson. They never marry across the river, but what's interesting as a part of the picture I'd like to paint in this book is that they frequently marry across the ocean!

Vincent Astor's sister was married to Prince Serge Obolensky, and is now Mrs Raimund von Hofmannsthal; Ashley Chanler, great-grandson of John Jacob Astor and nephew of the late famous "Sheriff Bob" Chanler, who married Lina Cavaleri, is married to a Braganza princess; a daughter of the Dows-Olin clan, kin to all the Livingstons and cousin to most of the other "River" families, is married to a Swedish diplomat named Knut Thyberg; and Honoria Livingston, tall, lovely sister of that present Janet Livingston, who is namesake of the one who danced with George Washington and Lafayette, is married to an even taller Irishman named McVittie whose Gaelic brogue makes him more "foreign" so far as accent goes than any of the titled Muscovites or sledged Polacks.

So that if Dutchess County is as characteristically an American countryside as we brag and believe it to be it would seem a fair deduction, from particular to general, that the American Melting Pot not only still boils merrily and makes a good goulash, but that its culinary synthesis is not confined to tenement houses and mobs which came over in the steerage.

But I continued to wonder whether Rhinebeck really was characteristic. Here in Dutchess County, both historically and in post-War fact to-day, we are definitely an amiable conglomerate. We are conglomerate among

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the aristocrats on the "River," conglomerate on the farms, conglomerate among the artisans and tradespeople in our village, conglomerate around Jake's stove, and casual towards new foreigners who still scatter in. I knew that the United States as a whole must be a similar conglomerate so far as census figures, immigration tides, and cold statistics go, but was it so amiable a conglomerate?

What about these, or those, "damned foreigners" scattered from Maine to Minnesota? Were they an "alien," undesirable element? Or when you got close to them were they just "people," good, bad, and indifferent, like the rest of us? Like my conglomerate neighbours here in Dutchess?

I had travelled and explored among African cannibals, Arabs, whirling dervishes, and devil-worshippers who turned out uncommonly often to be good, bad, and indifferent people, not much better or worse than the rest of us. So I thought it might be an idea to travel and explore awhile among "these foreigners" in my own United States.

## II. *Scandinavian Americans*

WHEN I WAS FIVE YEARS OLD AND WE HAD MOVED FROM MARYLAND TO Kansas we had a Swedish cook with coiled and braided yellow hair, but all I could now remember about her was that Mamma said she was dumb, and that she smelled clean when she picked me up in her arms, like sunshine and fresh soap. Since then I had never been very Scandinavian-conscious, so that when I went out to Minneapolis and began meeting scads of Swedes, not to mention quantities of Norwegians, Danes, and Finns, it was like a visit to a foreign country. They knew I was planning to write about them. They were not antagonistic or inhospitable, but they were not cordial or exuberant either. They didn't open up, and, despite an extremely kind individual or two, I felt for several days that Mamma had been right—and I had let myself in for a dull sojourn with heavy and phlegmatic people.

Then dawned slowly what I consider to be a major psychological discovery about the Scandinavians. They are like electric cooking-stoves and concert violinists. They get hot slowly. They are unlike the Irish, Spanish, Italians, and gas-stoves, which burst into immediate flame. These children of the Vikings warm up slower, but when they get hot they're volcanic. Those in Minneapolis, and presently in a radius that embraced the

whole North-west, slowly got as hot as Heifetz and ran me ragged, from universities and churches to beer-saloons and dance-halls, through their own parlour and kitchen doors, out across the corn-fields, and back to their *smörgåsbords*, where the third, seventh, and twentieth drinks "went round and round," until hearing them counted made me dizzy.

It may have been a plot, but I don't think so. If it was they are the greatest comedians on earth. I had gone out there with letters to some very big Swedes, who had sent me a big, heavy limousine, with a big, heavy, middle-aged, slow-speaking, and slower-driving Swedish chauffeur. He drove me stately, stolidly, in a placid paradise of lakes and park-ways to see swans and statues, including a big bronze of Ole Bull. When he showed me another statue all covered with metal feathers, which he said was Minnehaha and Hiawatha, and remarked that we would next see the dome of the Capitol, I revolted and said, "For God's sake, I didn't come out here to look at dead Indians, or dead Swedes either, and I'm tired of riding in a hearse."

He said, "I have a brother by Red Wing who is not dead. He has a big farm and five children and a hundred cows and a boat."

Pretty soon we were on a four-lane concrete highway, still doing under thirty. I said, "We'll never get there." He said, "I don't want to stand this thing on its nose." But he began to let it out a little, and presently, being in a huge car with plenty of power, we were rolling at a safe and steady sixty. Then the needle started climbing towards seventy, past seventy on a long, safe straight-

away, and suddenly he laughed out loud. "De ole bus, she go like hell yet—faster than a mile a minute!"

The sun shone brightly, and barns like cathedrals whizzed by, with silos like the embattled towers they sing about in Lutheran hymnals.

We stopped at a filling-station, and I got him a glass of beer. He said, "You are not a professor, so? You don't like to look at statues?"

And I still don't know whether he was kidding me or not, but when we came later to his brother's cathedral-barn, house, windmill, outbuildings, and stacked fields of corn to feed his brother's hundred cattle, he took me straight into the kitchen without any nonsense, and there was a big pot of coffee, and presently a bottle, and brother was glad to see brother, and the wife and grown daughters, who all had coiled and braided yellow hair and smelled of fresh, unperfumed soap, just like the soap I remembered in Kansas, brought us food, and were glad we had come. My not being able to drink didn't make any difference. They were sorry, but regarded it simply as an unfortunate affliction. They told me about a man they knew who couldn't drink anything, either, not even beer.

"He was a German, too!" said Brother Oscar, our host. Oscar was considerably older than Brother Olaf, who had brought me there. He had come to America in the days following the Jim Hill railroad boom, more than forty years ago, and seemed to me as typical a Scandinavian-American farmer as I might ever find—stocky, sturdy, slow, dumb superficially, and really not dumb at all. He knew what it was all about, here in

his own agricultural North-west, and I had a grand afternoon of slow, dull, intelligent—forgive the paradox—conversation with him. It began about his German friend, a dairy farmer too, the one who couldn't drink. He said there were many Germans around there, and when I asked how the Germans and Scandinavians got along he said, "Better than with the Yankees, though we're all Americans now. When I came over we were yust dumb Swedes who couldn't talk English, and the Germans were yust dumb Heinies who couldn't talk good English, either. They were Lutherans too; they love to eat, drink beer, go to church, sing and dance a little. I don't mean a German and a Swede is the same. Oh, my, no—we are plenty different. But we are all plenty alike too. My oldest daughter, Greta, is married to a German whose name is Oscar, yust like mine is, and they get on fine. My grandson, Oscar, by them is no foreigner, no immigrant. He speaks only English. He is an American, like you."

Oscar here had 147 acres, which was a bit larger than normal in this territory. Minnesota farms are hundred-acre farms generally, and always have been. His wife, Anna, kept stacks of farm bulletins handy on a shelf under the stairway, and knew where to find just what Oscar told her to find for us. She was not a slave, but Oscar was master of that household, and she was his willing helper. I know Yankee farms in Dutchess County where the women crack the whip and wear the trousers. But man is boss among the Scandinavians, and the women like it. Mrs Oscar was pleased to be helping us to be finding the figures. In 1881 the average

farm area was 121.7 acres. In 1910 it was 114.4. And it's still around 100 plus on the average. I learned that almost exactly half the farms in Minnesota (and this is approximately true in large adjacent areas of Wisconsin and the Dakotas) are owned by Scandinavians, about one quarter by Germans, and about one quarter by Yankees—that is, pioneer stock from the East, of English-language origin.

And what was the difference, I asked him now, between his farm, his way of running it, his way of living, and that of his German or Yankee neighbours?

"Not so much," he answered; "we all have the same machinery, electricity, the same crops, the same troubles. Maybe we go to church more; maybe we're cleaner, but I doubt it; we don't waste anything; maybe we're more thrifty. Take my Anna here," he said, pretending to be humorous, tapping her on the shoulder, but with a deep, heavy pride. "Yes, I guess our women are more thrifty."

Turning back to me, he said, "I tell you, though—walk in on any Minnesota farm and you can't tell a Swede until you hear the accent, or the man tells you his name is Larsen or something. I couldn't tell myself. You can't always tell by the name, of course, either."

"Well, what about the co-operatives we hear so much of these days? Farmers' co-operatives, producers', consumers'? You take the lead in that, don't you?"

"Yes," he said, "but before you write much about that you'd better go to the university professors. Here's the way it is, though. I don't think our producers' co-operatives are particularly Scandinavian. But the con-

## SCANDINAVIAN AMERICANS

sumer co-op idea, Ai t'ank," he said, brightening and showing just a trace of accent, as the old ones do when they become interested or excited, "Ai t'ank we brought him here! Anyhow, we Swede-Norwegian-Danish farmers were the first in Minnesota to have our own gas-and-oil stations. Fertilizer too. But if you want to really see something, go see what the Finns have done at Cloquet, the old lumber town up by Lake Superior. They began on a shoe-string, and now, by Godamighty, their own co-op stores are bigger, better than the Yankee chain stores. Those Finns have consumer co-ops for everything from baby shoes to coffins. If you want to see go to Cloquet. If you want to write see the professors."

Just then several neighbours, Jensen, Alexanderson, Kronberg, came in, having heard Oscar's brother had come from Minneapolis with a visitor. They were stolid, non-committal at first, then friendly. They fight sometimes, you know. Most of these elderly farmers were lumberjacks long ago. I think any one of them would kick you in the teeth if you sneeringly called him a "dumb Swede." Yet it's one of their own favourite expressions.

I may have learned as much as I ever did that afternoon and night—for we stayed over—about the Western Scandinavian-American farmers, their families and hired men, as distinguished from intellectuals, leaders, celebrities, and urban populations. They were willing to talk about anything, and I asked shamelessly all sorts of questions, and got some queer answers.

I complimented Mrs Johnson on her spotless big



kitchen, where we were having the party—everything shiny as the metal-work in a lighthouse—and she was pleased, but said, “Listen, I don’t know that it’s Swedish. Mary Hecht down the road keeps hers just as clean, and so do some of our Yankee neighbours.”

It was then that old man Jensen cut in :

“The Swede is generally clear-skinned, fair, and light-haired, so he’s clean-looking even when he’s not really so clean. I’ve known dirty Swedes. ‘Way back I hired a man who didn’t know American farm ways. He had yust come over. I showed him where he’d sleep, and how to work the pump and use the washbasin in the yard when he got up in the morning. ‘In the morning?’ he exclaimed. ‘But I don’t get dirty sleeping.’”

This wasn’t recounted as a joke, but we laughed, and, as the Reverend Larson, their Lutheran preacher, had joined us, everybody began to tell me classic jokes.

A Swede, walking along a railroad track, comes on a human arm; he looks and wonders; a little farther on he finds a human foot, but he draws no hasty conclusions. On down the track he comes to a mangled torso, and says, “I bet somebody been killed here by the railroad.”

I asked the Reverend Larson the why of this type of stock joke—the why of the “dumb Swede” tradition. He said, “Partly because we are really slow, serious, a little ponderous; partly because those of us who came to America were nearly all rural people—yokels. We were sometimes called ‘green Swedes.’ You have similar stock jokes about hayseeds of all nationalities. I tell you something else, though. We have a slight contempt

for lightness and frivolity, slick smartness. We think the light-minded man is a light-weight man."

Mrs Johnson, two grown daughters, and a girl who might have been a hired girl or a cousin had invited all of us to stay for supper, and were bustling about preparing food, pouring more beer, happy, gay as farm housewives are when entertaining pleasant company. Studying them impressed me deeply with what the Reverend Larson had said. I think they really do have a certain slow, heavy, almost stolid national quality of their own—even when accompanied by real charm and wit such as these friends had. I hope they won't mind when they read this, for it is merely another way of dropping the "t" out of "stolid" and saying "solid," which means substantial, dependable, sturdy. And their slowness is paradoxical, just as their "dumbness" is. They are often dumb like foxes, and when they get steamed up they can still "go like hell yet," as Olaf said of the limousine.

The supper that night in the big kitchen raised another paradox. Thrift and frugality are a Scandinavian housewife's pride, yet I have scarcely ever seen so much to eat. Cheeses, cold meats, smoked meats, dried fish, *smörgåsbord*; then on top of it hot foods in abundance. Mrs Johnson said, "My mother taught us it was a sin to burn old pieces of bread. We must never even throw away hard old crusts, never waste anything—but a worse sin is meanness, stinginess, pinching the stomachs of guests or the hired help."

Late next morning, as Olaf and I drove back to Minneapolis, I thought, considering that only yesterday I

had been a stranger and he a serious, almost pompous, chauffeur, that the hospitality of these Scandinavian Americans, when they did open up, was the most generous I had ever encountered except among the great Arab tribes of the desert.

I don't know yet what happened, or whether Olaf spilled the beans, but from then on everything was different. Of course, no such thing as I'm going to suggest actually occurred, but it was *as if* the Scandinavian Americans of the North-west had held a secret caucus and said, "We'll give him the works, tell him the works, and show him the works, by the front door, the back door, all doors, and let him make what he can of it."

Early the following morning Emil Meurling, editor of the *Svenska Amerikanska-Posten*, with Professor A. A. Stomberg, head of the Scandinavian department of the University of Minnesota, and Carl Anderson, who heads big corporations, called on me at my hotel and took me to see a weird, grotesque, magnificent, imposing structure known colloquially as "Turnblad's Castle," and officially as the American Institute of Swedish Arts, Literature, and Science. It occupies an entire block in a central residential district of Minneapolis. It is a flamboyant, medieval mansion which cost millions, ornate with towers, crenellated turrets, gargoyles. Inside it is like the palace of a mad Spanish grand duke who had Vikings for his hobby: heroic caryatids carved in wood, supposed to be Norsemen, but looking suspiciously like Latin Neptunes; sea-monsters,

*Ratskeller* ceiling, prows of ships, stained glass, a magnificent grand-ducal staircase, everything but the kitchen stove, and in lieu of it no less than a dozen Swedish-tiled faience chimney fireplaces which soar to the ceilings; but the most beautiful of these, alas! is in a Turkish room with Moorish divans and hanging lamps, which actually came from a Sultan's palace in Constantinople, but might have been designed in a bad moment by Belasco. It was built a little before the World War by Swan Johan Turnblad, a poor Swedish immigrant boy whose parents came to Minnesota as pioneers in 1860, when there were still bears and Indians. He came over from Sweden in the steerage, pioneered west with his parents, helped cut down trees and build the family log-cabin, walked miles to school through virgin forests, burned candles at night like Abe Lincoln, and learned, before he was seventeen, to be a printer. At nineteen he went to Minneapolis, as Ben Franklin had gone to Philadelphia. Beginning as a common typesetter, he presently found himself in charge of the then small, moribund Swedish newspaper the *Svenska Amerikanska-Posten*, which has since grown into the big publication edited by Meurling. In a few years Swan Turnblad had made it the most important foreign-language journal in the whole Northwest. He became its owner and a power among the Scandinavian pioneers who began to pour into Minnesota, Wisconsin, the Dakotas, in the eighties on Jim Hill's new railroad. He bought real estate, and while devoting at least half his time, money, and energy towards the interests of his race group became a multi-

millionaire. In other words, he became a Horatio Alger hero. He came late, as most Scandinavians did. Their two great tides of immigration flowed very late into the American Melting Pot—in the fifties and then in the eighties—and they were hewing out homesteads as pioneers in the North-west three centuries later than we did on the Atlantic seaboard.<sup>1</sup>

In 1900 Swan Turnblad, who had helped his father build their first pioneer shelter of logs and branches in the forest below Minneapolis scarcely thirty years before, began construction on the "castle" which my new friends were now showing me.

They were watching my reactions, which were principally wonder. We stood at the foot of the great stair-

<sup>1</sup> It is agreed in all histories that the first Scandinavian "immigrants" came with Leif Ericsson to "Vinland" (probably Massachusetts) long before Columbus, but nobody knows how many came with him, how long they stayed, or whether the Kensington Rune Stone is a monumental hoax or a real proof that some of them stayed and wandered west. It was dug up by a farmer named Olaf Ohman in Douglas County, Minnesota, and purports to prove that some did in the year 1362. If they did they disappeared completely. Three centuries later the first colonists came to Delaware, but it was not until 1845 that the real immigration movement began, mostly into the North-west, and at first very slowly. It jumped in the eighteen-fifties and -sixties, reached its peaks in 1880 and 1900, after which it took a dive, and has now practically ceased. The 1930 census figures show a total Scandinavian stock in America of 3,191,943 souls, giving Sweden a million and a half plus, Norway a million plus, Denmark half a million plus, and the Finns less than a hundred thousand. But these statistics do not give the complete picture, since there are no figures which can show how many Americans of mixed racial background to-day have a predominantly Scandinavian strain in them. One might add a million or more to the grand total of Americans who are half Scandinavian, and two millions perhaps of Americans who are a quarter so. But whether there are six million or eight million people in America with a strain of "Viking" blood in their veins is pure guesswork.

case, which has no parallel perhaps for ducal splendour in any other private home in America. It was not to be sneered at or laughed at. It was not to be smiled at, either. It was heroic, tragic rather.

I said, "Why?" I said, "Why in God's name did he do it? Did he ever live in it? Did he ever make his wife and daughter live in it?"

I stood gaping "Whys?"; for I knew that, whatever the answer, he could have been no mere *nouveau-riche* vulgarian trying to crash Society. There was something about the place's totality which stifled any cheap and facile theory before it could be formulated. The man who had built this might have been as mad as P  r Gynt, but he had been neither cheap nor vulgar. He lacked æsthetic intuition or culture, but had loved the enduring and beautiful built on a rock. . . .

"No," Stomberg said to my last question. "He scarcely ever lived in it at all. After a few months he moved out of it with his wife and daughter to their comfortable, unpretentious quarters upstairs in the square brick building of his beloved *Svenska Posten*. Of course, most Minneapolis residents, including some of our own people, accused him of wanting to have the Swedish Crown Prince as a house guest and break into Society, but, as a matter of fact, he had a different motive. He built it as a monument to the Scandinavian-American pioneers of our North-west, and hoped it would become a centre of Swedish-American culture. And it really has become just that—lectures, music, forums, exhibits," Professor Stomberg added with a smile, "despite the anachronisms I perceive you have

noted in its structure and *décor*, which we are gradually somewhat changing."

I said, "I know what it has become, but you haven't told me everything yet. He built it as a home, moved in with his wife and daughter if only for a little while? Why was that? Was it the fulfilment of a boyhood dream? What was it?"

Professor Stomberg said, "That brings up a tangled question concerning the Scandinavian-American psychology. It was perhaps his protest against the conception most Americans had thirty years ago, and some may still have, of the typical Scandinavian—the heavy servant girl, the hired man, the vaudeville caricature of our race. I suspect he built it to help us prove a point which no longer needs proving. But his pride, I think, was more for his group, his fellow-immigrants, than for himself. By the way, I think you had better meet his daughter."

So we went over to the *Svenska Posten* office and met, immersed in papers at a big roll-top desk, a charming woman, gracious and dignified, who could to-day be leading as gay, selfish, and luxurious a life as she wished in Palm Beach or on the Riviera, but who chooses to remain and help administer the widening activities of the institute founded by her father, contributing large sums of her own money to cultural and scientific purposes, remaining tranquilly herself in the background.

Professor Stomberg took me for lunch to a restaurant where we could see Scandinavian people, eat Scandinavian food, and talk about the Scandinavian soul. It was strange, after having lived in the more mixed East so

long, to see pale hair, blue eyes, and Nordic pigmentation so completely dominant. We had Norwegian fish-balls which would have interested my Cape Cod friends because they tasted like sweetbreads and were soft in texture. We had soup for dessert, *fruktsoppa*—stewed, mashed fruit in a soup-dish with lots of juice and a piece of sweetened toast with seed on it to crumble in the soup as one does crackers—accompanied and followed by quantities of coffee. It was difficult to remember that Stomberg was a famous historian, because he did not talk as an intellectual. He talked humanly and simply. His smooth, ruddy, boyish face with youthful, bright blue eyes behind gold-rimmed glasses made it equally difficult to remember that he was an elderly professor from the near-by university. But what he told me was unforgettable. He was talking, with reference to Turnblad, about the gradual dissipation of what he called the Scandinavian-American inferiority complex.

“One of my own little boys, now grown,” he said, “came home from school one day to me and cried because he had been called a Swede, and I am going to try to tell you why.

“When the Scandinavian-American immigration tides were at their peaks, in the fifties and again in the eighties, things were at a low ebb politically and economically in Norway and Sweden. We were discouraged and poor as a country, and as typical families we were poor, backward . . . and our families were often too large.

“We emigrated from comparative poverty to an already rich America, and began mostly as small



pioneer farmers, hewers of wood and drawers of water. When you write later of what we have contributed to America you must not forget that America was very good to us. But I am sure none of us realized that while our farms out here were later being blessed with telephones, electricity, better roads, scientific methods and machinery, the Model T, and then the closed car and the radio, our own country back home had progressed and now had these things, too. We still thought of Sweden as the poor, backward country we had left, and we children grew up with the idea that we had come from a poor country to a rich and glorious one. Our language embarrassed us. To neighbours, perhaps no brighter than ourselves, whom we called 'Yankees' we were 'dumb Swedes.' Consequently we were awkward, bashful, and felt ourselves stupid. As a matter of fact, we are, perhaps, a little slow, a little heavy. There is generally a grain of truth in most vaudeville chaff of that sort. But, at any rate, especially as children, many of us were a little ashamed of our origins. . . ."

"Were those *your* origins?" I asked.

"Of course. My father was a log-cabin pioneer with no money and too many children. He worked as a day labourer on the railroad. But don't mistake me. It was never our parents we were ashamed of, or our manual labour. It was our poor, backward race. Of course, all that is ended now. Turnblad's castle was the swan song of an epoch. Scandinavian-American children now are proud of their race and its achievements."

I was thanking him after lunch, and afraid I had tired him, but he said, "Why, we haven't even started!

We have all afternoon before us. I haven't shown you anything yet."

As we drove through Minneapolis, across the river to St Paul, he pointed to bridges, skyscrapers, big hospitals, schools, park systems, designed and built, he told me, by Swedes, Norwegians, an occasional Dane. Eighty per cent. of the finest construction in Minneapolis, he said, had been conceived, designed, and built by them.

I said, "You've built this place, and you just about own it, don't you?"

"No," he said, "that wouldn't be true. I guess we own the State of Minnesota, in a manner of speaking, and control its politics for better or worse, but, as a matter of fact, most of the urban big business and most of the big private fortunes are controlled by Yankee families."

Talking, we arrived at another ornate, gaped-at structure dominated by the children of the Vikings, the much-discussed State Capitol, whose architect was Cass Gilbert. It looked to me as if he had bred the Woolworth Building to St Peter's Cathedral of Rome, and that this was the pup. It was modern Romanesque—which means mongrel and magnificent.

Dominating its esplanade were two heroic bronzes of two more dead Scandinavian-American Horatio Alger heroes. On one was inscribed simply "Johnson," which sufficed. He was perhaps Lincoln's closest prototype . . . Swedish John Johnson . . . rail-splitter, labourer, printer, Governor, then almost surely President of the United States had he not died. The other was inscribed

"Knut Nelson." Norwegian he, Governor, Senator, great American, statesman.

Inside among the living, since Floyd Olson, ex-freight-handler, who might have been the greatest of them all, had been cut off untimely in his prime, we would be meeting presently as Governor a Danish Horatio Alger hero named Hjalmar Peterson, a former country newspaper editor from the Utopian town of Askov, where they have no gaols because they have no crime; also a Swedish Secretary of State named Mike Holm, who was one of the six poor sons of a poor farmer immigrant; also that Senior Justice of the Supreme Court Judge Andrew Holt, once Hult, whose father came through the forest to Alexander's Lake with an old cooking-stove on a wheelbarrow. They would be kind to me, and candid, because I came with one of their old buddies, Stomberg, now a bigwig at the university, whose own father had carried on his broad shoulders sacks of corn across the ferry to be ground.

But first of all, in the reception hall, the gubernatorial anteroom, we encountered Mr William Williams. Six mature, bronzed, athletic feet and several inches of him rose from a desk and said, "Hello, Professor Stomberg! Can you come along fishing next week?" I couldn't figure out whether he was a super-secretary or a generalissimo doorman like the one at the Ritz, but minus the admiral's uniform. He turned out to be a little of both, surviving all Administrations, and since the death of Olson probably the most popular man in the Capitol. He had played marbles in the public school across the street with Cass Gilbert, and

had afterwards become a big-league ball-player. He seemed to be a Viking type, but his hair was straight and black, and I said, "Are you a Dane, or what?"

He said, "No, I'm part Negro, part Indian, and part German. I guess that makes me a Norwegian, eh, Professor Stomberg? Maybe your friend could come fishing too. We're flying up to meet the Swedish Game Commissioner at International Falls on Sunday."

I said I wished I could, and would he tell me about the murals while we waited to see the Governor.

"There'll be one I guess I don't need to tell you about," he said, pointing towards it. He didn't. It was the First Minnesota stopping Pickett's charge at Gettysburg. Most of those "Swedes" hadn't been here long enough even to learn English, but they knew what they were fighting for, and died like heroes.

The next mural, which he did have to explain to me, was Father Hennepin, Jesuit explorer, blessing St Anthony Falls in 1681. "I guess the blessing took," he added, "for the Falls now furnish power to all the mills in Minneapolis." The queer thing about this North-west was that while the explorers came early the settlers came late. In 1850 the forest was still filled with bears and Indians. Another big mural showed the Treaty of Traverse des Sioux, made in 1851 between Chief Iron Bear and Peg-leg Lee. The noble Redskin, depicted in all his regalia giving Luke Lee the hand of friendship, was later hanged, in 1861, Williams told me, for the massacre at New Ulm. "It just won't do to trust us Indians," he added.

A fine one was a battle piece by Howard Pyle; it

showed the Fifth Minnesota in action at Nashville. Williams said, "Pyle was here for the unveiling. Old General L. H. Hubbard, who had led the charge, looked at it and said it was lousy. The hill in the background, he said, had been on fire, and he wanted it on fire! Well, I got a step-ladder, and Howard Pyle climbed up with his paint and brushes and set it on fire, and there it is. It sure looks on fire, don't it?"

Governor Peterson, when we got in to him, was a country newspaper editor in his shirt-sleeves, who'd have probably never sat there except for the accident of Floyd Olson's death. We talked for a quarter of an hour or so, mostly banalities, but out of the conversation did come this. I don't pin it on him, or quote him, or mean to prove anything by it. It is merely what seemed to me to appear from the conversation and from later observation of my own, throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin, the Dakotas:

The Farmer-Labour party in that area is a camelopard. The Scandinavian-American farmers are not, as we now misuse the word, Radicals at all. They are agrarian Liberals, almost untinged by Marxian or Communist doctrines. They are interested in co-operatives, but are by nature small capitalists, owners of property, respecters of individual property rights. I met and talked with many of them, rich and poor, in their own barns or kitchens. Well, all their talk showed that they were farmers who had kept their *independent*, individualist tradition. They think in terms of free farmers and free farms, privately owned. They are strong for co-operatives, but dead against Communism,

and will remain so. The urban Labour groups, on the contrary—for example, the truckmen's union in Minneapolis-St Paul—are Marxian, Socialist, Red-tinged, flirt with Communism, and are sometimes as savage as any group in the East. Both animals which combine to make this what's-it are fighting "big business," but for different reasons. And consequently the party leaders, to keep harmony, must balance two eggs on the point of one stick.

Before we said good-bye to Governor Peterson he and Stomberg told anecdotes about Askov, Peterson's home town. People had been sent there from Washington some years ago to work and lecture as a part of the nation-wide "Americanization programme." They went back to Washington and said, "We felt like fools. It was those Danes who could teach us. They had no gaols, no courthouse, no prosecuting attorney even, no crime, no poverty. They had community theatres, co-operatives, schools for cooking, farming, singing. And as for cleanliness and economy," had added one lady lecturer on domestic science, "it was teaching my grandmother to suck eggs."

Peterson said, "My mother taught me it was a sin to leave food on one's plate." Stomberg said, "My mother told us when we were children about a vain, pretty girl who was sent to get bread—a big, hard, round loaf in the old country. It rained, and coming home she had to cross a muddy puddle. She laid the loaf down as a stepping-stone so as not to soil her dainty feet. The loaf and the girl sank into the earth, and were never seen again."

"Bread is sacred," said the Danish Governor. "Bread is life," said the Swedish professor, and we went on to meet more Scandinavians. We happened to miss Harry Peterson, Attorney-General, who had been a pupil of Professor Stomberg's, and arrived in the office of a buddy of Stomberg's, the "Swede named Mike," who is Secretary of State, President of the Swedish-American Institute, Master of Arts, rare bird—an intellectual politician.

I said, "Is it a nickname?" and he said, "No, my father christened me Mika, good Swedish, but nobody believes it. They say my real name is Olaf, and that I took Mike to get the Irish vote."

Here's what he told me of his origins, and I put it down because it's a shaded type-synthesis of the origins of so many once Scandinavian families which are now American. He said, "I was one of the six sons of Hans Hanson Holm, a prosperous small farmer in Ringvatt-net, Central Sweden. It was good farming country, and my papa seemed rich to us kids, measuring wealth by what is in the barn and larder. But he brought us all as immigrants to Minnesota. We got a bad start in Marshall County and became very poor. He had picked the land badly, on sand-ridges, got two crops and no more; then all our stock died from old wolf-bait left in the pastures, and there was nothing in the barn or larder, and I said, 'Papa, why did we ever come over here?' and Papa said, 'I'll tell you, Mike: I was rich for one farmer in Sweden, but there were six of you boys, and I wanted you to have more land.'

"We went farther, and finally found wonderful

land, wheat and grass land which is still wonderful, at Roseau, on the edge of Manitoba. It is now the American homestead of my family. Our little district put out a quarter of a million dollars' worth of clover seed in one year recently."

I said, "It sounds like the whole history of the Swedes in the North-west to me. Do you mind if I print it?"

He said, "No, but remember that my papa was better off than most, and lucky. Don't forget that enticing us to the North-west became a racket. Among the hordes brought here by the immigration racket fostered by the railroads not all were so lucky. Those who chose Dakota prairies deceitfully green with the lush, beautiful buffalo grass were not lucky. Their grass is gone like the buffaloes, God help them."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Dakotas, into which the two great Scandinavian immigration tides spilled over, scattering, repeat the Minnesota agricultural scene, but streaked through with wide, tragic drought belts. A large batch of well-to-do Scandinavians, in which the Norwegian element is very strong, spreads down across the Minnesota line into Iowa, almost as far south as Des Moines. Stony and Hamilton counties swarm with them. In Kansas the rural Lindsborg district has become world-famous for its choral society. They do Handel's *Messiah* at annual festivals, which draw classic-music lovers from all corners of the globe. In Chicago and the Great Lake south shore areas are additional large groups and outstanding individuals: millionaires, educators, executives, bankers, farmers, cooks, inventors, hired men, factory- and mill-hands. They seem to have gone in for pretty well everything but crime. I haven't been able to find record of one famous criminal, one celebrated murderer past or present, one notorious gangster or gorilla, who was Scandinavian. Detroitward in the auto belt live Vincent Bendix—everybody used to have a "Bendix" on the old Model T, and now he's president of aviation and brake corporations—Johanssen, who invented the gauge by which the whole world now measures steel to the half-millionth of an inch, and who is the only man living who can enter Henry Ford's room without



Mike told me of farmers in the lands turned now, perhaps for ever, barren who cherish to this day and exhibit with bitter laughter the coloured lithographs of waving wheat-fields, pictures of fat cattle on Elysian plains, folders, circulars, sent by the ton to Norway and Sweden by "Jim Hill" in the early eighties. I recalled cynical Arab sheikhs in Baghdad, Irak, who still derisively cherish coloured lithographs of Woodrow Wilson. And I later flew over deserts bare and dry as the Sahara, except that they were nightmare-studded with empty barns, farmhouses, silos, rusting reapers and harvesting machines, where no blade of grass was left to reap or grain to harvest. Prosperity and adversity. The Scandinavian Americans have had both, as we all have. But a mark is not set up for the purpose of missing the aim, and since the aim of this book is to tell of their successes and their achievements, we return to Professor Stomberg's pupils and buddies in the Statehouse.

The next one we met was Judge Andrew Holt, Senior Justice of the Supreme Court, a spry little gentleman with a goatee, past eighty-two years old, and running for a new six-year term of office. He and Stomberg had been boyhood friends and neighbours in the pioneer log-cabin days. They took me down to a tiny, cheerful, frescoed crypt in the bowels of Cass Gilbert's political cathedral, and it was the damndest thing you ever saw for potent, grave, and reverend

knocking; Knudsen, now President, and other "big Swedes" (Knudsen's really a Great Dane) in General Motors; most of them Horatio Alger boys who ploughed or worked as mill-hands, or whose fathers did.

seniors. It was like what boys build in the woods and don't tell their parents about. There was a table, coffee service, ash-trays, cigarettes, cigars, and lazy arm-chairs, and nobody could come in except those five Supreme Court judges and the buddies they chose to invite. What put the climax on it was a Lilliputian stage, footlights and all, with a panorama done in oils of this same spry, twinkling-eyed Judge Holt, thigh-deep in a trout stream, with rod, reel, creel, and high boots which had been given him by his boy-friends of the Bench on his eightieth birthday. Stomberg beamed, and I felt like Dante chaperoned by Virgil, *forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit*—for they began *juvabiting* at a great rate about the giants in the earth who had been their fathers.

"They were good men . . . strong men," Judge Holt said, not piously, but with a chuckle. "Your father, Stomberg, was big like you, more husky. You remember when we were little he never said much but 'Ya, ya,' or 'Nay, nay,' but I was a skinny little fellow, and once he yelled at me, 'Look out, the wind will break you in two!' He could carry a hundred-pound sack all day and never grunt. . . ."

"One reason they were so strong in the shoulders," Stomberg said, "was that after they had built their log-cabins, with stumps standing around and a little corn growing sparsely between, they found out they could make a dollar a day working for the railroad with wheelbarrows. You remember, all of them who were old enough broke their backs for the big pay. . . ."

"Wheelbarrow!" laughed the Senior Judge. "That

was the funniest thing that happened to us, when Papa first came with us up the river and landed at that shanty of Jorgennsen's, and then tried to take the cook-stove on a wheelbarrow six miles through the forest to Alex Anderson's lake. It was dumb, but the thing was he did it. He got there. Trees bumped, he fell down, he got the wheelbarrow tangled in branches, made circles, and swore, but he set the old stove up on his own land, and Mamma cooked on it that same night."

This was so good that Stomberg didn't interrupt him, and Judge Holt continued:

"But I remember a better one than that. When Gudemanson came to the Lake he arrived in an ox-cart through the forest, with a lot of little pigs following like puppy dogs, and a pretty daughter, Mary. They found Alex Anderson's cabin, and were invited to camp as we had been. The mosquitoes were terrible, and there was only one mosquito bar . . . over Alex Anderson's own big bed. So Alex, who had been looking at Mary but never saying a word, invited Mary to sleep under the mosquito bar with him, and Mary, who had been looking at Alex but never saying a word, thought this was a fine idea, so, being good Swedes and good Lutherans, they went and found a row-boat in the black night and went down the river in it to St Paul and waked up a preacher and had him marry them, and started to row back upstream, and by that time it was the middle of the next morning, and the current was so strong that they had to abandon the row-boat and take to the woods, and they reached the cabin dog-tired in

mid-afternoon, and went to sleep together under the mosquito bar."

It was a happy marriage, Judge Holt added. I could meet their children if I wanted. They had all done well . . . Dr Anderson, who had the big clinic, and Mrs So-and-so, who had married the banker, and the one who had the farm in the St Croix Valley.

The Supreme Court Justice and the head of a department in a big university were telling of early hard times. Professor Stomberg said:

"We first went to Indiana, a whole immigrant caravan of us, some dozens of families. We had a little money, but not much. Indiana was flat, and we didn't like it, and we didn't do very well. Then a lot got ague. There were thirty or more, and many of them died. We got down to actual poverty—real poverty, I mean—and had to be helped. Then some of us moved, came on to this paradise. But even after we got here I remember how my father used to work all day cutting wood to earn twenty-five cents."

"Yes," said the Judge, "my father cut wood too for twenty-five cents a day, and when they began working on the railroads for a dollar a day it was wealth."

I began to have a queer, thrilled feeling as I sat listening to these two living men, active, honoured, in their grey-haired prime. I had read such things, of course, in books, but mostly about Ben Franklin, Davy Crockett, Daniel Boone, log-cabin days more than a century ago in New England and in Kentucky, pre-Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary days in my own East, whereas here it all happened the day before

yesterday.<sup>1</sup> I was talking with living "prairie *Mayflower*" pioneers; Judge Holt was now telling of how his own mother had picked wild berries and walked fourteen miles to sell them, of how the log-cabin windows had to be cut small so that hungry bears could not get

<sup>1</sup> On the Atlantic seaboard the Scandinavians settled mostly in New York, Delaware, and New England. While the picture in the East remains somewhat the same, the pattern behind it is considerably different. Here Scandinavian immigration began two centuries earlier, in colonial days; included mature, well-equipped adventurers, explorers, statesmen, intellectuals, leaders. During the reign of the child Queen Christina, in the year 1637, two ships came loaded with Swedish colonists, sponsored by Christina's famous Prime Minister, Oxenstierna. As the Dutch controlled the east bank of the Delaware river, the Swedes took the west bank as far up as Trenton Falls. A fort was built where Wilmington now is, and named Christina. Before 1642 Peter Minuit, Dutch head of the New Amsterdam Colony, had been succeeded by a Swedish governor. More Swedes came and settled on land, which included a great part of the present Chester and the city of Philadelphia. The famous John Morton, who cast the deciding vote for the Declaration of Independence, was a pure Swede, born in America, descendant of those colonists, and his real name was Maarten Martenssen. The vote of the Thirteen Colonies was tied, six to six. He was ill in Philadelphia, got out of bed to cast the vote which made America what she is to-day and earn the name of "Keystone State" for Pennsylvania. One of the "believe-it-or-not" wheezes of history is that "George Washington was not the first President of the United States." A Swede named John Hanson was elected to Congress in 1779, and elected President in 1781 by Congress assembled. He was really President of Congress, of course, but was the only "President" the newly born United States then had. George Washington came later, and was the first President elected by the people. John Ericsson, a Swede living in New York, invented the *Monitor's* revolving turret, the "cheese-box on a raft" that battled with the ironclad *Merrimac*. He afterwards perfected the screw propeller. More recently Jacob Riis was a Dane, and the late Knute Rockne, of course, a son of Norway. The list of famous dead Scandinavian Americans, including Magnus Johnson, who died only a couple of years ago, is an integral part of American history.

The State of Delaware enthusiastically spends a quarter of a million dollars for the Tercentenary of the landing of the first Swedish colonists. A magnificent park is laid out on the site of Fort Christina.

their shoulders through—Stomberg telling of how after they had got a window-pane Indians would come and press their faces against the window in the night, and of how his mother would say it was *kusligt*. They tried to translate *kusligt* for me. Not “shivery,” not exactly “ghostly.” “Spine-chilling”? No. It was “eerie.” Yes, it was “eerie.”

One of my two little immigrant pioneer boys, now grown to grey hairs and honours, recalled a queer Indian story about another family. The grown men were away, the mother was washing clothes, and the young son was chopping wood near the cabin. Some Chippewas came, armed, painted, angry, and said, “Stop chopping wood, get in your cabin, you and your mamma. Bar the door and the window. We are going to have a fight.” Presently there were running feet, shots, war-cries, shouting, struggle, and then silence. They ventured out, and there were several of the Chippewas who had warned them lying dead, and several dead Sioux warriors. No wounded.

“In the East,” Stomberg said, “they used to say the only good Indian was a dead Indian. We used to say here in Minnesota the only good Indian was a Chippewa.”

Abruptly they bridged a transition to parental prosperity, with lands cleared, Indians and bears gone, tree-stumps dynamited, spreading farms, receding forests, waving wheat-fields, sons set off to school or college. Judge Holt remembered how one summer Stomberg’s father had bought a big red threshing-machine which worked with power from horses turning round and round, and of how it was he who a little

later bought the first steam-engine in the district. The elder Stomberg had become so fond of his engine and threshing-machine that he kept travelling over the countryside with it himself and being engineer long after he could have afforded to sit at home and pay others.

"Do you remember," said the Judge, "when he had finished one setting and was ready to cool off the engine and move to another, he would just open it wide and let off all the steam with a roar you could hear in the next county? He didn't know it was bad for the engine, and anyway it was a glorious noise." They remembered, both shaking with laughter, how, at Hans Polson's when the water got low and it nearly exploded, Professor Stomberg's papa swore. "My God, that engine!" said Judge Holt. "It took four oxen to move it, and it had no safety-valve!"

I have written all this down partly because I liked it, but mainly because it seems to me, multiplied by some hundreds of thousands—millions actually—of other Scandinavian-immigrant pioneers, to be their common history in America.

During the next several days and nights I seem to have been skidded hither and yon by these traditionally slow-moving Scandinavians, tossed like the ball in a fast game, from Olson to Knudsen to Sven, from Norwegians to Danes, Finns, and Swedes, from politics to banking, farming, high society, the cultural arts, to lumber camps on the Canadian border and back again. Don't ever monkey with a Scandinavian unless you

mean business. And for God's sake don't ever ask him for anything unless you want it. They take requests seriously.

They showed me Edgar Mattson, President of the Midland National Bank, whose father, Hans Mattson, had pushed a wheelbarrow and written a grand book of pioneer reminiscences about it; Theodore Wold, President of the North-western National, another immigrant Viking's child; a spattering of Swedish and Norwegian manufacturers and millionaires, most of whose fathers had done day labour in their lives for twenty-five cents a day, and who again assured me deprecatingly that the really big business was still in the hands of the "Yankees."

They whizzed me far out into the country, past farmsteads with barns which looked like ocean liners upside down or regimental armouries, to show me the enormous Land-o'-Lakes Co-operative, which is a dairy-men's producers' co-operative, controlling already 40 per cent. of the Minnesota output, neither Marxian nor a trust, the famous "Middle Way." The Swedes go in for producers' co-operatives. The Finns in Northern Minnesota and Wisconsin operate successful consumers' co-operatives, which sometimes include entire small communities. Coming back, we stopped at a lot of farms and had too many cups of coffee. The farmer's name was always Peterson, if not Johnson, and his wife was always named Mrs Peterson, if not Johnson. Of course, there were many big, prosperous farms where her name would have been Frau Schmidt—but I was up to my neck in Scandinavians,



leaving the Germans for a later chapter. Meanwhile, if either Mrs Peterson or Mrs Johnson said, "Why, *hello*, Hans [or Olaf]," to one of the city notables who were skidding me around the map we had coffee in the vast, clean kitchen, light, airy, shining, beautiful. If they didn't know any of my friends by their first names we had the coffee in a dark, stuffy parlour with whatnots, seashells tied with ribbons, horsehair sofas, Bible, and an organ—the same parlour as on all prosperous farms . . . as was, is, and ever shall be. Frequently they would want us to stay until they had time to send for the Lutheran preacher and roast a few geese or pigs or something.

I mention Lutheran preachers and churches because they are an integral part of all these communities. Practically all Scandinavian Americans are Lutheran, and, though seldom fanatical, go pretty generally to church on Sundays, where they hear three sermons a month in English and probably one in Swedish or Norwegian. While the churches and church leaders have been active in movements for both temperance and prohibition in America, my observation was that Scandinavian Americans are natural, enthusiastic drinkers of beer, which is five cents a glass, and better, I don't know why, than in the East. My friends showed me so many churches and beer places I lost count of them. Another paradox, if you like. Seldom drunkards, they are the best regular customers of the hundreds of saloons, beer-parlours, and dance-halls which still line Amsterdam Avenue as in the old lumberjack days, and of which the largest is the

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Stockholm, with a central bar more than a hundred feet long and an orchestra ably directed by a member of the Minneapolis symphony! He is a tall, distinguished musician named Nyberg who plays the double bass with the symphony orchestra; when he works here his double bass becomes the old bull fiddle, and he makes it roar, while his equally talented wife, mother of five handsome kids, sings songs in Swedish that make the other Swedes gay, happy, and sad. The last night I went there with a group of Scandinavian friends we saw farmers with their entire families, poor hired girls with no escort and a nickel or a dime to spend, swank, glittering rich groups from higher social circles, professors of philosophy and pretty prostitutes, ditch-diggers and the dean from a big college. "You must hear Mrs Nyberg sing *Nikolina*," my friends said, and after she had sung it she came to our table and translated it for me:

For her hand I asked her father,  
Got an answer never dreamed of.  
I never came down the steps so fast!  
Then I wrote her to meet me when the  
    moon rose  
In the oak-grove Saturday night.  
Her papa came instead  
In a dark cloak with a club!  
Oh, *Nikolina*!  
Now we wait until her father croaks,  
And plan to have a fine time  
Kissing on the old man's grave.

Everybody clamoured then for a song whose title sounded like *Johan Snip't'n*. They told me it meant *Johnnie-on-the-Corner*. She said it would be harder

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to translate because it didn't have any "plot," but here is how she tried:

Johnnie bought an accordion with eight keys,  
Shiny, bright, and nice.  
Now he plays for us to dance Saturday nights,  
And we never go to church any more.

Girls smile and show their teeth  
While he pulls the accordion,  
*Oom, zoom*, until the sun rises.  
Girls and farm-hands know his tunes and swirl.  
He plays so well that all our shirts get wet.

There was laughter at an adjoining table where a good-looking servant girl had come hurrying in with her hat askew, out of breath, to join the party and dance with her sweetheart. She had told them something, standing ruefully while her friends howled with laughter, and everybody wanted to know the joke. She had said, "I slid down the fire-escape. I guess I be all right, but, Yesus, I got a hell of a twist."

Beer was five cents a schooner instead of a dime as back East, and five cents too in Viking Hall, where a pay-as-you-enter dance was in progress. Admission was fifteen cents and included supper, which consisted of crackers and cheese and coffee. Some of the girls were in sweaters, some in evening gowns; some of the men in shirt-sleeves, others in dress suits and tuxedos. They danced fox-trots and jazz only about half the time. Every other tune was a schottische, waltz, or mazurka. Nobody was drunk, and you had to go outside to smoke, but it was very gay and boisterous. What made it different from most American dance-halls was that middle-aged and elderly people, grandfathers and

grey-haired old women, danced as gaily as the young ones.

The days continued like hurried dreams, like passages from *Peer Gynt*, or like the modern dramas which have five or six separate beehive stage-sets with different things going on simultaneously in all of them.

I was in a woods by a lakeside, right in the city of Minneapolis, where the late beloved, cantankerous Norwegian immigrant Judge Andreas Ueland, distinguished jurist and author, had built a nest of adjacent mansions for his various sons and daughters—big, handsome houses with intersecting groves and lawns. Minneapolis had grown up round them, and now they were country estates on a city avenue. Brenda, the principal daughter, a "black" Norwegian with thick, straight, raven hair, was engaged like a typical, stolid, Scandinavian in simultaneously harbouring a Russian pianist, arranging to send an incipient local child-prodigy to the right school in the East, bringing up a sub-deb daughter of her own, finishing a story for one of the national magazines, telephoning Martha Ostenso, helping me meet more Scandinavians, straightening out a domestic tangle in the kitchen, nearly beating me in two straight sets of tennis; and when some neighbour came to ask help about two or three other urgent matters she calmly jumped into the lake, swam out a quarter of a mile or so to cool off, and came back and helped the neighbour! Yet they really are slow-moving. She was. She was never hurried or hectic. I was the one who was exhausted.

I was elsewhere now with a wholly different mundane group, being sponsored at country clubs and cocktail teas by a radiantly flaxen-blonde-beautiful and kind, pure Swedish lady, Mrs Ehrma Strachauer. It was Society with a capital S, big-league, Social Register, rotogravure Society, and she was a local queen of it. She will forgive me for mentioning it, because it was unusual, an exceptional sidelight on the composite picture of Scandinavian Americans. They go in a great deal for culture and the arts, but not very much—even after they have become both rich and cultured—for Society. There was a brilliant, dazzling, kindly, but super-sophisticated mob at her house, teasing me a little, because she was a Swede and I was writing about “the Swedes.” Her husband, a distinguished surgeon of non-Scandinavian ancestry, who is prouder of her than anything else on earth, said, “Seabrook, d’you know why there are so many mules in Missouri and so many Swedes in Minnesota?”

“No, sir, I don’t believe I do.”

“Well, it’s because Missouri had first choice!”

I noticed that their whole domestic staff was Asiatic, including a Chinese butler and Chinese maids, or maybe Filipino, or something of the sort. At any rate, they were all slant-eyed. My hostess said, “I can’t employ Scandinavian help as my friends do! One dumb Swede in a house is enough.”

A pretty woman with a highball and the funniest hat I ever saw screamed, “Ehrma didn’t make that one up! Harriette made it up, and Ehrma stole it. Do

you know what the Scotch carpenter said when the Swede fell off the roof? ”

I never found out what the Scotch carpenter said, for other babbling drowned it out; and when I got back to my hotel Maurice Rose, who is the only Jew in Minneapolis, as it were, and who was the late Governor Floyd Olson's friend and chauffeur for many years, closer to him, perhaps, than anyone else on earth, and now drives for Governor Peterson, was back from the Capitol waiting to take me to see Paul Olson, Floyd's father, that rugged old freight-hand, who went on pushing a truck when he could have had a Rolls Royce, a house with soft bed and servants, and a desk under the dome, loafing in his son's reflected glory.

We found Paul Olson, who had trucked for twenty years on the Northern Pacific, laid up a little from rheumatism, in a hard, plain, wooden armchair in a Railroad Brotherhood hospital, the same sort of bare, clean room that any other laid-up truck-hand would have had if disabled. His son, the late Governor, too had been a freight-handler. Paul Olson had recently retired, and will push a truck no more. But he will live to the last as he has always lived, and for no tangled pride or proletarian propaganda reasons, either, but simply because it is his way of living. I shall remember his face as long as I live. It is a great face, hewn out of granite from the side of a great mountain. I was seeing the static source from which had come Floyd Olson's dynamic driving power, and I was seeing—mixed up with the granite—the finest iron ore

that Scandinavia or any other foreign land could send to Melting Pot America. The old man said, "Yeah, it was tough. It was a tough break for Floyd, a lousy break considering how young he was and what he would have done, but there's nothing anybody can do about it now."

These words were colloquial, but it occurred to me that Epictetus had not said it any better. Paul mourns his son, but with no sloppy nonsense. Maurice Rose told me that on the day of the operation, in the autumn of 1936, Floyd Olson's young daughter was on her knees in an agony of wet, streaming tears and supplication, crying, "Please, God, don't do this to my father! Don't do it, God! *Don't* do it!"

"But from the moment Floyd died, and she was told he was dead," Maurice added, "the kid never let out a whimper."

In the placid shadow of the old man's, the grandfather's, great stone face I could easily believe it.

Some hours later and some hundred miles away, at St Olaf's College, in Northfield, home of the famous Norwegian Lutheran Choir, I was looking into another face carved from the side of a granite mountain, but shadowed by no grief. It was that of Dr F. Melius Christiansen, composer and director of the Choir. Another Horatio Alger hero, by the way, this Doctor of Music and conductor of chorales. His ancestors had been blacksmiths back in Norway, and his father had been a mechanic. This Norwegian-American college, co-educational, with some thousand young students of Norwegian-American stock from all parts

of the United States, has produced perhaps the world's finest choir of young, non-professional mixed voices.<sup>1</sup> Their angelic singing and their equally angelic, predominant flaxen-haired, golden-haired, tow-headed, natural platinum blondness made me think of the pun in Latin by that old Italian Holy Father of the Church. "*Non Angli sed angeli!*" he said—and it's more or less true of the St Olaf Choir.

Old Doc Christiansen, however, F. Melius, Mus.D., for all his mop of shining hair, like clouds around the Great White Throne, is no angel. His granite face was unshaven; he was just back in a bad temper from a fishing trip; I don't think he'd had his lunch yet; he glared at me, said all he knew about the gramophone records was that they had made them in a big building somewhere near Camden, New Jersey, and that for his part he didn't think they were so hot anyway, except the one of Martin Luther's "Battle Hymn." Then he grinned at me and said, "I love to catch fish, but I hate to clean 'em."

<sup>1</sup> Scandinavian Americans figure prominently in other fields of music and in all the arts. In opera are Lauritz Melchior, Kirsten Flagstad, Sigrid Onegin, Kersten Thorborg, Gertrude Wettergren, Jussi Bjoerling, Marie Sundelius, Julia Claussen, Eide Norena, Göta Ljungberg, Karin Branzell, Danish Reinald Werrenrath. Among composers and conductors Werner Janssen and Howard Hanson, who wrote *Merry Mount*. In sculpture Gutzon Borglum is a Dane, and Carl Milles is a Swede. In painting Jonas Lie, born in Norway, is President of the National Academy of Design; Carl Oscar Borg, born in Sweden, living in California, painting Westerns, and Birger Sandzén, Swedish, living in Kansas, doing landscapes, rank high in contemporary art. In literature, in addition to Veblen, of course, and names I have mentioned in the text, there is now Sally Salminen, who was a Scandinavian housemaid in New England, and has written a novel, *Katrina*, which the whole world is reading.



A ghost at St Olaf's, which almost overshadows the angelic choir, and may, in fact, completely overshadow it when all those beautiful voices are stilled in death or singing new songs in heaven, is that of another recently dead giant, O. E. Rølvaag, who wrote *Giants in the Earth*, which still sells, roars like Moby Dick, and is the saga of the Scandinavian-American pioneer days in the North-west . . . which were only the day before yesterday. They themselves, the several million pioneers with their children, put him higher than Knut Hamsun, who won the Nobel Prize, and a good many non-Scandinavians agree with them. Everybody was sorry I had come out to Minnesota too late to meet Rølvaag and Floyd Olson. They told me, of course, all about how Knut Hamsun had been a street-car conductor for years in Minneapolis, but Rølvaag is the one whose memory still roars. Rølvaag was a hard young fisherman, from a hard fisherman's settlement, from 'way up on the coast of Norway where the Arctic Circle cuts in. Horny-handed, gangling, and awkward, he landed from an immigrant boat in New York with exactly a dime, no word of English, nothing but an immigrant railroad ticket to South Dakota. He survived the three days and nights by train on a nickel's worth of bread and a nickel's worth of plug tobacco, and at the end of the train journey walked all night without food or water across the prairie until he found settlers who could speak Norwegian. He worked as a day labourer, factory-hand, tended bar in a saloon, washed dishes in a restaurant, as Carl Sandburg did a generation later, and died with a string of uni-

versity degrees in the chair of literature at St Olaf's College.

When we got back to Minneapolis late that afternoon my supposedly slow Scandinavian friends, whom I had begun to confuse, in nightmares, with glaciers transformed into avalanches, said, "We guess maybe you need a little rest, so come quietly and meet us at Dr Arvetson's house, where we'll eat a few crayfish with a few quiet friends."

So instead of going to bed I innocently went.

The veranda and library were crowded with cronies, mostly in their shirt-sleeves, judges, journalists, state officials, architects, a couple of millionaires, a farmer, a plumber, lawyers, a couple of professors from the university, all Swedish this time—a sort of supper club, I gathered, which met once in a while in members' houses. In the living-room a long, T-shaped table had been spread and set for about twenty-five people. In the kitchen were the wife, other ladies, and some hired help. Emil Meurling beamed, Dr Arvetson was cordial, they made me take my coat off, and my young lawyer friend Walfrid Peterson, who looks like a surly football player but is gentle and sweet with a sly sense of humour, introduced me.

On a large side-table were heaped *smörgåsbord* dishes with beets, eggs, *foie gras*, salads, rices, cold meats, hot meat-balls, and all the varieties of fish that ever swam in river, lake, or ocean, dried, smoked, pickled, oiled, with shells, without shells, with fins,

without fins—every fish *except crayfish*, which I didn't see anywhere.

Well, we piled our plates and all got seated at the table, and everybody had a double-sized whisky-glass in front of him but no water-glass, and full bottles of Brännvin stood around—Brännvin being the Swedish equivalent of whisky. It was colourless, like water, gin, or vodka. I had never seen it before, and had been trying to find out from Peterson what it was like. Whisky? No. Gin? No. Vodka, raki? No-o-o. Is it, maybe, like the distilled drinks of the absinth group, which cloud when you mix water with them? Did it cloud, I asked him, turn opaque when you poured water into it? He stared at me with his innocent, surly eyes, and replied gently after measured thought, "Do you know, I couldn't tell you. I don't believe—anybody—has—ever—poured water into it. I don't believe anybody has ever tried."

Nobody tried now. All the glasses were filled neat, and the drinkers all rose. They stood solemnly, and burst into solemn male harmony in Swedish. I thought it was religious or a hymn. Peterson translated:

Deep down in Småland,  
They play on accordions.  
They sing hail to the land,  
Of Thor, Wodin, and the ancient gods.  
Hail to the land of Svea!  
Hail to the land of the potato  
Which gives us whisky! Hail!

They drank, roaring, "Skoal! Skoal! Skoal!"

It tasted nearest to vodka. We sat down and began eating huge quantities of fish. A professor near me

had not drained his glass, but was sipping it. Our host shouted, "August is a baby again! He sits there sucking." Mrs Arvetson, our hostess in the background, brought me a glass of ice-water. A mountain of a man said, "Poor fellow, where did you get that disease that you have to drink water? I don't want to go there! With me it is opposite. My life is devoted to the conservation of water!"

Meurling whispered that the big man was hydraulic conservation engineer for the State of Minnesota, an international authority, one of the best, but that he sometimes drank too much, that his wife and best friends gave him hell about it.

They were up again, with refilled glasses, singing a *rondo* in Swedish which Peterson translated for me:

The first drink has gone round, tra, la, la!  
 He who didn't drink it doesn't get the second.  
 The second drink goes round, tra, la, la!  
 He who doesn't drink it doesn't get the third.

They ate more fish, piled high, and then came big hot plates from the kitchen with beef-and-kidney stew, potatoes, and rich gravy . . . still no sign of crayfish.

After a while, towards midnight, they were singing:

He who doesn't drink the thirteenth, tra, la, la, la, la,  
 Doesn't get the fourteenth drink. . . .

And they were also singing one about how it (potato whisky) "curls itself warmly round the heart, like the tail of a pig."

Swedes all, they were entertaining me with jokes about Swedes I wouldn't dare to print, and worse ones about the Norwegians. A Swede and a Norwegian are

like a Marseillais and a Parisian. They tease each other, but are brothers. The hydraulic engineer had taken a fancy to me, and I to him. He had started roaring a song in Swedish, and the ladies who were hovering fled for their lives. Peterson said it was a melancholy song which began :

There sat sadly alone  
One Saturday night  
A ragged, bedraggled old whore.

The engineer told in English a long and endless story, continuously funny, about a Swede with a pet tom-cat, and the tom-cat got sick, and the Swede 'phoned the veterinary and said, "My cat is sick," and the veterinary thought he said, "My calf is sick," and after a while the cat was better, and had all the cats in the neighbourhood organized and working for it, one gang digging holes, another covering, and a third out looking for new ground.

A while after midnight, and after we had eaten more than I had ever seen anybody eat before, the table was cleared, and the ladies brought in mountains of crayfish, red like lobsters, with bottles of Swedish punch and pots of black coffee. The twenty-third glass of Brännvin had been going round, tra, la, la. There had never been a drop of water on the table (except the one glass Mrs Arvetson had brought me), and nobody was under the table. People can eat and drink like pigs, said Meurling, but good people can also eat and drink enormously, like gentlemen.

The big Swedish hydraulic engineer told three dreadful jokes about big Swedes, and said, "What's the

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matter, you poor fellow, don't you know one?" I took a chance and tried one that Carl Sandburg had told me in New York.

"What is dumber," I asked him, "than a dumb Swede?"

"Nothing!" they all howled.

"Oh, yes," I quoted Carl, "a smart Norwegian!"

"Yow!" he roared, and came over and hugged me like a bear, and the others were laughing too, more than the joke warranted, and he shouted to me, with joy, explaining, "My wife is a smart Norwegian! I will go home and tell her!"

About half-past one I was so sleepy I had to go home, and they made me stand up and drank to me and sang, "Skoal! Skoal! Skoal," and I had a queer choky feeling around my heart and a deep wish that all I might write about them would be fair and true.

About two hours after I had gone to sleep Walfrid Peterson came to my hotel room and routed me out of bed. It wasn't yet five o'clock in the morning. All they were going to do to me that day was to fly me up to Cloquet and Duluth, then to see some logging up around International Falls, and over the Dakotas. Walfrid was clear-eyed, bright, gay, in his slow, solemn, Swedish way, "the twenty-ninth drink had gone round, tra, la, la," and I, the supposedly fast-moving, peppy, speed-loving native American, lost my sleepy temper and said, "For cryin' out loud, have you been in bed at all?"

He said placidly, "Oh, yes, we all went home a little

while ago. You don't have to hurry. We've got nearly ten minutes to get out to the airfield."

We flew, and it seemed to me that the only time I had been allowed to sit still with those ingenious paradoxes in heavy, blond human form was now while we hurtled through the clouds at over two hundred miles an hour.

Substituting lumber, pulp, iron ore, and shipping for the agricultural picture, I found the same Scandinavian-American influence spread through Northern Minnesota and Wisconsin, where Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, and Finns supply most of the local colour, most of the muscle, and a lot of the brains. If I was surprised at anything it was that Duluth, on Lake Superior, had a bigger shipping tonnage than any ocean port of its size in the whole world, and though the lumber business has seen its heyday, I found the river full of logs at Cloquet, saw what I was laughed at for thinking was the biggest lumber-yard ever, and was then shown a sawmill several blocks long, all under one roof, that is the biggest wooden building in the whole wide world, and should be dealt with by Ripley.

This community of Cloquet, in Northern Minnesota, not far from Lake Superior and Duluth, is a centre of the true consumers' co-operatives which the Scandinavians, particularly Finns, brought to America some thirty years ago. They came from a hard land of forests, isolation, poor soil, and cold which had bred self-reliance in them and a strong sense of independence. When men of that breed co-operate it means

something deeply different from Communism or Socialism. They came as lumberjacks and sawmill hands, and remained to till the stumpy land when lumber receded. Living was hard, pennies had to be counted; they banded together to help each other economically, yet retain their individual initiative, property rights, and economic freedom.

They began humbly, in tiny groups, sometimes with only ten or fifteen dollars. They bought stuff wholesale, resold it to themselves as individuals at current commercial retail prices, and at the end of a season rebated to themselves whatever savings were left after their own overhead had been deducted. "Savings" would be the real word, rather than "profits." To-day the local co-operative society in the small town of Cloquet has climbed to a peak of over a million dollars a year and has caused several chain-stores to withdraw, though these consumers' co-ops neither fight nor are enemies of independent business.

Beginning in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, also in Massachusetts, these co-operatives have grown and prospered; they now have big central co-operative wholesale warehouses, even factories and plants of their own scattered throughout the country. But here is a point not understood by everybody. A consumers' co-op does not become a producers' co-op when it starts its own refineries for oil and petrol, or its own factories. Stuff is not made for sale in competition or for profit, but simply to effect a saving to the consumers who are members of the group. And the real contribution of the Scandinavians to America in this



field has been, one may say, the consumers' co-operatives.

The producers' co-operative (for instance, Land-o'-Lakes, which has 87,000 members and produces more than a third of all the butter in Minnesota) is a wholly different thing, which may be and often is very much like any other group banded together for competitive profits in the free-for-all field of big business. There were authentic producers' co-operatives in America long before the Civil War, long before the Swedes came; so producers' co-operatives haven't necessarily anything to do with the Scandinavian-American picture. The biggest is probably the California Fruit-growers' Exchange. Another is the Florida Citrus Exchange. Another is the Dairymen's League of New York, which does a yearly business of 82,000,000 dollars.

The answer to why the consumers' co-operatives, which were a new thing, have done so well in democratic America is not only simple, but reassuring. The consumers' co-operative is *within* the accepted normal economic order. It is not in conflict with it and does not disrupt it. Communism and Marxian Socialism, on the contrary, are *outside* the established economic order, do conflict with it, and when possible disrupt it. Communism is definitely *revolution* in social economics. The consumers' co-op is a form of *evolution* which can build itself into, and operate as a healthy part of, the system on which American democratic independence was founded, for which most Americans still stand. Furthermore, as Bertrand Fowler and Marquis Childs have pointed out, it has no quarrel with anyone, does

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not want to tear anything down—in short, is a method of doing things in the present state.

A healthy example of development is the petrol and oil co-operative which began in 1921. It began in the town of Albert Lea, Freeborn County, Minnesota. A small group of farmers began it with 500 dollars. In that little county alone its assets are now 125,000 dollars; it is the leading distributor of petrol and oil in the county, and has paid back to its consumer members (without robbing anybody) savings, or patronage dividends, of more than a quarter of a million. It made some of the big oil companies angry, but the farmers aren't angry yet, and never were, at the big oil companies. They're not angry at anybody. They themselves as farmers are still in competition with each other, believe it proper that one man should be rich and another poor if one is brighter or more industrious than his neighbour. I don't believe there's a single Communist, a single Red or Pink, a single parlour or kitchen "Bolshevik," in that whole county. I certainly couldn't find one. But this is not a treatise or essay on economics. Substitute other commodities from shoes to sealing-wax, in other groups, still growing, and you have the essential picture. And this, apart from human culture and agriculture, is the outstanding contribution of Scandinavians to modern America.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Celebrated individuals who have made special contributions to American culture, colour, and progress are impossible to enumerate in a book of this sort. Beginning with Lindbergh, whose grandfather was a Swedish-farmer immigrant, and Greta Garbo, who has never become a naturalized American, yet is an American "institution," Scandinavian names distinguished in the real sky and among the terrestrial stars who shoot across the silver screen

On the way back East I stopped by the shore of Lake Michigan, among the dunes, to visit the poet Carl Sandburg, pure Swedish by blood, but born at Galesburg, Illinois, and so passionately American, so great a poet of the people, that posterity will probably put him alongside Walt Whitman.

I found him surrounded by Swedish goats and fair-haired daughters, in a grey flannel work-shirt and nondescript trousers, inhabiting a house built on a crag among pine-trees. Its flat roof was his workshop in fair

are: Norwegian Bernt Balchen, Byrd's Antarctic pilot; Eric Nelson, Swedish, engineer of the first U. S. Army flight round the world; Commander Charles Rosendahl, Swedish descent, Lakehurst, survivor of the *Shenandoah*; Gloria Swanson, Warner Oland, Greta Nissen, Anna Q. Nilsson, Carl Brisson, Hersholt, Leyssac, lumping stage with screen, and Eva Le Gallienne, who is half Danish. In athletics Walter Johnson is supposed to be Swedish, and Molla Bjursted Mallory was born in Norway; Marjorie Gestring, Olympic diving champion, is of Swedish descent, and so is Martha Norelius, who was free-style swimming distance champ in 1928; Helen Wills-Moody is supposed, by Walter Winchell, to have some Swedish blood; the American *Who's Who* says her mother's name is Anderson. In politics some names that stand out are Claude Swanson, Secretary of the Navy; Mary Anderson, who began as an organizer for garment-workers, and is now head of the Woman's Bureau of the Department of Labour; Katherine Lenroot, chief of the Children's Bureau; several Senators and Congressmen.

In the field of education more or less every big university has one or more distinguished counterparts of my Minnesota friend Professor Stomberg. The American *Who's Who*, for instance, lists six solid pages of Andersons, most of whom are Scandinavian, and among whom Norwegian Rasmus Björn Anderson is possibly the most distinguished. In industry E. F. W. Alexanderson, born in Sweden, is chief engineer of General Electric; Ole Singstad, born in Norway, built the Holland Tunnel; Eric P. Swenson was Chairman of the Board of the National City Bank, New York; the Sunstrand Brothers, David and Oscar, developed and control one of the standard adding-machines, and I repeat that I am citing these few names "for instance." This book is intended to be a high-light picture—not a reference work or exhaustive compilation.

weather, looking out on the vast expanse of inland sea and down on his own Swedish cathedral-barn, high-peaked with perpendicular siding, where he raised his goats and the horses which his daughters ride bareback into the surf when the wind roars. His brother-in-law Steichen had just been out there photographing Carl in his old flannel shirt with the goats. We had Swedish goat butter and Swedish goat cheese for luncheon—but I doubt whether Sandburg has read or written a word in Swedish since his childhood. He has two great and deep passions—two great and deep loves—Abraham Lincoln and the common people. Critics say his prose on Lincoln will be as enduring as his poetry. It's saying a great deal, because *Chicago Poems* and *Smoke and Steel* are already classic now in his own lifetime. He is an authentic great man, certainly the greatest Scandinavian American in the living field of literature—and also a perfect example of the Horatio Alger type which has been a recurrent theme in this Scandinavian chapter. He has never split rails or built log-cabins, but was in turn dishwasher, day labourer, porter in a barber's shop, truck-handler in a brick-yard, field-hand in Kansas, before he became the "poet laureate" of industrial America. King Gustaf V of Sweden bestowed on him on Carl's sixtieth birthday the Royal Order of the North Star. It is a gold-enamelled star hung on a black ribbon and worn round the neck, except that I doubt if Carl ever will. In the centre is the Latin inscription *Nescit occasum*. ("It never sets.")

Whenever possible I've called a Swede a Swede, a Dane a Dane, and a Norwegian a Norwegian. I was

warned in the beginning that they object to being lumped. Yet when Brenda Ueland said to me, "We are gentle and kind, but we have guts," she meant the Scandinavian people. When Carl Sandburg said, "We have an outward passivity that is hard to define; we can mask an inner storm better than any Englishman," he didn't mean his own Swedes in particular; he meant his race group. When a Norwegian said, "We have self-control, with a slow fire underneath," he meant the same thing. Where a Dane said, "We are too introspective, we Danes; we are all potential Hamlets," a Norwegian matched it with, "We Norwegians are heavily mystical," and a Swede said, "It is dark so much of the year in Sweden." When I say of them all, "You go slowly, but you go a long way," they reply, yes, they suppose so. Yet I was told of a recent contest in a Stockholm daily, for the best analysis of the Swedish character, won by a man who wrote, "We are the only people who have the word *lagom*, yet lack that very quality." It was explained to me that *lagom* means "not too much and not too little." I remembered how the Swedes, Danes, Norwegians, had first shown me nothing, then ran me ragged, and I asked, "Isn't that *lagom* business somewhat true of you all?" and they said, "Yes, we guess so." So it isn't, perhaps, so much that they go slowly as that they are like the old Model T engine, hard to crank, but when they do warm up, "de ole bus, she go like hell yet."

What I finally think of these Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, and Finns by ancestry, but American now to the core, is that they are, to requote myself a little and

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at the same time give Gilbert and Sullivan a new context, the "most ingenious paradox" God has ever created in human form on this dizzy globe.<sup>1</sup>

They are heavy and dumb, yet gay and extremely intelligent.

They are stolid and phlegmatic, yet full of fantastic imagination, streaked with fire.

They are the most glowering, pig-headed people on earth, yet will later acknowledge themselves in the wrong, if wrong, with a disarming smile.

To cap the climax, they are slow, yet generally get there first.

They crossed the Atlantic, everybody knows, long before Columbus; then Lindbergh flew it first; and it's a fair guess, if they ever get to tinkering with the Goddard rocket, that they'll be the first to reach the moon.

<sup>1</sup> In New York the eighth floor of International Building, Rockefeller Centre, is like a palace, city hall, or Government building—in Stockholm. The Swedish-American Chamber of Commerce is luxuriously installed in five immense rooms; the complete consular outfit of Sweden is housed with even more magnificence; Naboth Hedin, the Swedish Walter Duranty, with his American-Swedish News Exchange, which is meshed in with the Chamber of Commerce. They publish in English an attractive magazine called *The American Swedish Monthly*. There are more Swedes than Norwegians in the New York metropolitan area, and they are better organized. They have an Engineers' Club at 27 West 51st Street; a Scandinavian "Foundation" and library at 116 East 64th Street; a Chauffeurs' Club; a tennis club; employment agencies; immigrant homes (Norwegian ones too in this case); several restaurants, good and bad, with too much emphasis on the *smörgåsbord* (glorified *hors d'œuvres*) and not enough on Scandinavian cooking; hundreds of "Swedish Massage" addresses, some of which represent the highest achievement in medical massage and hydrotherapy, others which are phony, and a few which have interested the police.

### III. *Italian Americans*

RAILWAYS, HIGHWAYS, SUBWAYS, SKYWAYS, BUILT MOSTLY BY ITALIAN gang labour, and associated more closely than anything else in the American mind with modern Italian immigration, roar now through cities and areas in which Italian Americans to-day participate in all the current vocations, professions, careers, rewards, splendours, and miseries.

The thickest areas, of course, are New York, where Fiorello La Guardia is Mayor and Edward Corsi is a Deputy Commissioner of Public Welfare; New England's textile centres and market gardens; Chicago and other big cities on the Great Lakes; bright spots in Florida where they help grow oranges; another in the Mississippi Delta; and out on the Pacific Coast where Angelo Rossi is Mayor of San Francisco, with Al Capone languishing in Alcatraz, while half a million free ones now make legal California wine.

I had been wondering why the colour they have contributed to the American kaleidoscope is so bright and noticeable, since the whole three to five million of them are, after all, a comparatively small element of the more than 125,000,000 population of the United States. But after playing with them a couple of months, and thinking about it, I can give a simple and obvious answer.

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Their contributions include garlic and good food, wines, music, from accordions, hand-organs-and-monkeys, to Metropolitan grand opera—contributions to the art of living—to the spice and gaiety of life. They have given to America spaghetti, broccoli, garlic, finocchio, spumoni, “red ink,” and a hundred sauces, street music, *bel canto*—and organized crime, which is equally colourful, though evil.

But, despite all that, when most of my countrymen think of Italian Americans, now that the immigrant gang-labour picture recedes, they are quite likely to think first of Joe the bootblack or Tony the barber. So the first Italian American I looked up in New York was precisely Joe. This particular Joe had begun shining shoes when he was a kid in Brooklyn, and was still a shoeshine man, but had prospered, so that he was now Mr Joseph Policastro, friend of opera singers and bankers, proprietor of the shoeshine concession in the big building at 250 Park Avenue, and in other buildings down town.

Friends brought him to lunch, and he was modest about his achievements, preferring to tell us first about the general shoeshine set-up in New York. The Italians practically dominate it in all five boroughs. There are a few Greeks, a few Negroes, a few of other nationalities, but not many. About 20,000 Italian-American boys and men are shining shoes or running shoeshine stands in New York to-day. The gross intake in nickels and dimes is 400,000 dollars a week, or 20,800,000 dollars a year! Big fortunes have been made in it, generally by Italian Americans who bought concessions in big office



buildings. The two shoeshine kings were Tony Asti, who had the concessions at 96 Broadway, 120 Broadway, 26th Street and Broadway, 33rd Street and Broadway, and Tony Lauria, who is still alive and retired. Asti had a string of racehorses, and became proprietor of Griffin's shoe-polish. They employed fifty to a hundred boys in a building, paid fair wages, and had taken profits running up to 20,000 dollars a year and more. Joseph Policastro, who is a smaller "king," tells me that with the depression and one thing and another if a proprietor clears 6000 or 7000 dollars a year now he is doing quite well and thinks it is very nice. The big fortunes were made around 1895 up to the World War.

"Tell me about yourself, Joe," I begged, and he said, "I began back in 1901, when I was a kid, with a capital of one dollar ninety-five cents, and this is how I invested it. I made my own box, but the nails and iron foot-rest cost me thirty cents; a brush cost me fifty cents; another brush cost me another fifty cents; a dauber cost fifteen cents; polish, black and tan in bottles and tin boxes, cost me fifty cents. It was dearer then than it is now. I worked on the streets and in parks. I was paid five cents for a 'shine' and ten cents for a 'polish.' You don't know the difference? Well, a shine is just a shine, but a polish was a ceremonial in those days. You spit on the shoes like a Chinaman does on laundry, and snapped a long cloth, made it crack like a whip. It was a ceremonial instead of a shoeshine, and took about a quarter of an hour, so that you really made more money on the nickel 'shine' than you did on the ten-cent 'polish.' In those days a grocery boy made

only about two dollars a week, and we kids made four or five dollars, with tips, shining shoes. I worked for two years in the streets, and then threw my box away, and went to work for Tony Lauria. I soon began to make six or seven dollars a week, with tips that might add three or four dollars more. Then I got me a building and began hiring people, and here I am. A good boy can now make twenty or twenty-five dollars a week, including his tips, and a lot of the boys I employ make that much."

"Do you know any barbers, Joe?"

"Sure; I know plenty of them. You must meet Giuseppe Susca, President of the Barbers' Benevolent Society. The Annual Barbers' Ball is going to be next week in the 71st Regiment Armoury, and I hope you'll go to it."

I said, "I'll try to bring a lady, and I hope you'll bring one too."

"I can't go that night," said Joe, "but I'll introduce you to an Italian friend of mine named Ed who is going to take a lady, and you and your lady can go with them."

Joe took me to see Mr Susca, who turned out to be an elderly, cultured gentleman controlling a chain of barbers' shops from his biggest one at 19 West 44th Street.

We sat under the plate-glass mirrors near a red-haired manicure girl, who sometimes helped with the conversation, and he told me there were more than 20,000 Italian barbers in New York, about 70,000 in the United States, that 85 per cent. of all barbers

were Italian. There are 14,000 shops in Greater New York, and the gross intake is about 35,000,000 dollars a year.

The beauty shops, he said, took in about 50,000,000 dollars a year, more than the barbers' shops, but Germans, Poles, British Society women, Russian princesses—everybody—were in the beauty-shop business now, and it didn't exactly come into the Italian picture. If you're accustomed, by the way, to think of barbers only in terms of lather and hot towels it may interest you that Mr Susca is one of the founders and active directors of the Dante Alighieri Society, and has been knighted by the Italian King.

Mr Susca sent Ed and me complimentary tickets to the Barbers' Ball, and Ed was bringing a beautiful Italian prima donna, so I invited a Smith College prodigy, who is beautiful, too, knows something about music, and used to spend winters in Capri. The great night came. Ed and I looked alike in our tuxedos. The two ladies, on the contrary, were beautiful in such completely different ways that they immediately became close, whispering, giggling friends. My girl was bobbed-haired, straight, athletic. Mme Zuccara, with her incredibly tiny, hour-glass waist, delicious curves, curls, and cameos, was Violetta out of a long-ago *Traviata*.

When we got to the 71st Regiment Armoury, on Park Avenue, there were 10,000 people, including lots of beautiful ladies, but Ed and I still liked our two the best. It was partly a masquerade costume ball, so we wound our way through other Violettas and Lucias,

passing one Aïda, several grand dukes from *Rigoletto*, also a Sparafucile who was the bandit in *Rigoletto* with a black patch over his eyes, dancing with his tragic Maddalena. President Susca kissed the hand of Mme Zuccara, who was all those operatic heroines rolled into one, and we found that seats had been reserved for us in a front-row box in the first balcony; another one was occupied by Oggiano, Fifth Avenue's leading Italian-American art photographer, who was just back from Rome, where he had done a lot of intimate studies of Mussolini. Others were filled with Italian-American journalists, and a little farther along was Generoso Pope, probably the richest of all self-made Italian Americans. Out in the middle of the vast Armoury on a flower-decked platform was a big brass band, tubas, bass drums, all the usual instruments, plus a battery of accordions! In the intervals between dancing the band played *Torna a Surriento*, *Funiculi Funicula*, *O Sole Mio*. The crowd became nostalgic for sunny Italy. They also sang Italian words to the tunes of "Mary had a Little Lamb," "London Bridge is Falling Down," but the music that drove the crowd wild and that they all joined in singing was *Faccietta Nera* ("Little Black Girl"), written since the conquest of Ethiopia. The words are addressed to an Ethiopian child, and run, "Little black girl, you had a different country before, but now you are under the red, white, and green flag, and you're safe, and you will be prosperous and happy, so don't be afraid of anything. Don't cry, *Faccietta Nera*."

It became clear to me at this Barbers' Ball, and

increasingly clear as I went on to other groups, that most prosperous Italian Americans are enthusiastic for Fascism and Mussolini—in Italy—but are none the less good American citizens completely loyal to their adopted country. They are seldom Fascist propagandists in a subversive sense, but proud as can be of the job Mussolini has done over there in the land they came from. Prosperous and middle-class Italian Americans worship Mussolini as a hero, as they once did Garibaldi, but I could find nowhere any important group of propagandists or plotters who want to make America Fascist, and I don't believe there is any. There is a small group of deliberately subversive plotters, but it isn't nearly as large as newspapers sometimes suggest, and its leaders are perfectly well known to the State Department.

What I did find, however, when I went among Italian-American garment-workers, Labour groups, and their leaders was a violent and active propaganda *against* Mussolini and against Fascism. Apparently Italian Labour in America is generally anti-Fascist, just as the Italian-American "capitalist," whether he runs a big bank or a little barber's shop, is a shouter for Mussolini. They fight and argue with each other, smash each other's printing presses, and occasionally murder each other, but it all seems to be "in the family." The capitalists uphold Mussolini *in Italy*, and the workers want to help smash Mussolini *in Italy*, but none of it seems to have much bearing on their being pretty generally decent and loyal American citizens *in America*.

When I went among the garment-workers, to learn

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about them as Americans, everybody told me I should first go and see Girolamo Valenti, editor of *La Stampa Libera* (*The Free Press*). He wasn't easy to see, because the pro-Fascists had been recently breaking into his office and smashing his presses again. I was learning that while the Scandinavian Americans on first approach had been friendly if phlegmatic, these Italian Americans, more often than not, were suspicious, theatrical, and mysterious, doubtless because they fight so much with each other.

Dino Bigongiari, head of the Italian Department at Columbia University, a power in the Casa Italiana, being well known as an ardent Fascist, obviously could not get me an interview with Valenti. He turned me over to his cousin, Gino Bigongiari, formerly a journalist and now teaching in Columbia University, who said to me after a lot of deep-throated telephoning in Italian, "Go to 52 West 15th Street at eleven o'clock on Sunday morning. Go by yourself. Give three short rings and one long one, and Mr Valenti will see you."

I did, feeling like a conspirator, and Valenti was at his desk in an overcoat because the heat hadn't been turned on in the big old warehouse where he had his presses. He is a poetic-looking little man with a black moustache, past middle age, wearing a black butterfly tie and horn-rimmed glasses. He is a Marxian Socialist and a Radical Labour leader, but he and his paper are not fighting the American Government. They are fighting Fascism, and fighting capitalism when they think it unfair to Labour.

When he found out what I wanted he was helpful

and friendly. Here are some of the things he told me, checked afterwards from other sources :

Italians compose 95 per cent. of the garment-workers in Philadelphia, more than one-third of the total in New York, Chicago, Boston, more than half in Baltimore, about two-thirds in Rochester, a majority in Connecticut and some other parts of New England.

The proportion is likewise dominant, but slightly lower, in shirt-making and shoe-manufacturing. It is only during the past dozen years or so that they have begun extensively replacing Jews, Germans, and Russians. There are over 150,000 of them in New York alone.

Valenti told me that old sweat-shop conditions had been largely abolished, and that wages were now pretty fair, twenty-five to thirty dollars a week, with really expert garment-workers easily making forty or fifty dollars—and that the improvement had been brought about partly by the labour unions and partly by the United States Government itself. He told me I must see Margherita di Maggio, of the Garment-workers' Union, and that she would tell me more about conditions and wages.

He told me the Ladies' Garment-workers were the best organized, the men's more scattered, but pretty well organized; some of the textile workers were organized and some not; railway labour was the least organized of all.

I said, "Well, if conditions are pretty good and wages are pretty good, what are you leaders fighting for now?"

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"We're working to get the rest of the workers to join and support the unions; we're working to get better terms from the few employers who still deal unfairly with us. Where agreement exists with the owners and workers things are generally okay; where agreement doesn't exist we tell the workers still to fight. And, of course," he added with a grin, "we are fighting Fascism tooth and nail."

The fighting, so far as I can gather, and I repeat it, seems to be outside the field of American politics and government. Most Italian-American employers are Fascist, and most of the workers are anti-Fascist, but it doesn't seem to have much bearing on American democracy.

I said, "Mr Valenti, how many militant Fascists do you think there are in the United States—militant in the sense that they want to make America and the whole world Fascist?"

"I'm sure," he said, "that there are not actually more than a thousand in this whole United States of ours. We don't trail with them, and you don't have to worry about 'em."

I said, "How many militant Italian-American Communists?"

He said, "Maybe a thousand, maybe two thousand at the very most.<sup>1</sup> They've got a little newspaper here in New York, but you don't have to worry about them either. I must set you straight on one thing, however.

<sup>1</sup> The Communist party has a total enrolment of about 50,000, mostly Slav, Russian, Jewish, and Central European, and has more native-born Americans of English-language stock than Italian Americans.



As a Marxian Socialist I am anti-Communist, but between Communism and Fascism, if I had to choose either, I'd rather have Communism as the lesser of two evils. It's purely academic, however, and I hope it always will be here in the United States."

I said, "Well, what about your buddies, then? What about Carlo Tresca, the anarchist? What about Augusto Bellanca, of the Amalgamated, in Union Square? Isn't he Red? What about Arturo Giovannitti, the Labour agitator and poet, who has served time in prison? And Antonini, of Local 89 of the International Ladies' Garment-workers' Union? He's fiery and supposed to be Red, isn't he?"

He said, "Look! As a matter of fact, we all have different philosophies. I'm a Socialist, Tresca is an anarchist, Bellanca and Antonini are Radical Labourites. The practical point on which we merge and help each other is that we are all for Labour, all of us out to improve the conditions of the working man, all of us out to fight capital when it oppresses the working man. None of us are fighting the American Government as a Government. If we were we'd be put into gaol or deported, and deserve to be. I think you ought to go and see Carlo Tresca. You'll understand better when you talk with him."

So I appealed to Gino again, and the telephoning was even funnier than it had been in the case of Valenti. It was all in Italian, but I knew enough Italian to follow it.

"Carlo is out West? *Andato via già?* Ehh! This is Gino, not Dino! Oh, he's leaving for Chicago to-night.

Well, I've got an earthquake of an American writer here who is driving me crazy, and he has to see Carlo. He can't see him? I tell you he should see him. Oh, Carlo is right there in the printing office now, beside you at the telephone! All right, Seabrook will hurry in a taxi, and I'll be glad to be rid of him."

So I went down to the office of *Il Martello*, Tresca's paper, published twice a month if his presses don't get smashed in the interval, and there was no sign of Carlo Tresca, but a gentle, sweet, pretty little girl who looked like an Italian Madonna with her hair coiled in braids, who told me her name was Virginia Vacirca. Her father, Vincenzo Vacirca, Socialist Deputy, had been kicked out of Rome by Mussolini, and was now making fiery speeches against Cæsar in the Forum—that is, the "Vanguard Forum." She said Carlo had just rushed out to catch the train for Chicago. Over in another side of the room was a very large, glowering Sicilian, who played with a long butcher's knife on the desk. Virginia assured me that the knife was merely a paper-cutter. Two more glowering gentlemen came in, and sat over there too. They glared at me and told me Carlo had gone, *andato via* to Chicago. I happened to turn round to see if there were any other Sicilian gentlemen with butcher's knives behind me, and there was all of Carlo's baggage, handsome pigskin with his initials in gold, piled on a table, and I said, "Look, Virginia, I'm a friend of Emma Goldman's. She cooked dinner for me and gave my wife red roses. Please have a heart! What's the matter with me talking to Carlo Tresca?"

She said, "I don't think anything would be the matter." So she 'phoned him, and he came. Big, handsome, bearded, grinning, with a ten-gallon Borsolino hat that advertised him as an anarchist as far as anybody could see him; a deep blue shirt, well dressed, bland, puffing at an expensive Havana cigar, and as amiable as a lamb. I grinned back and looked at his pigskin luggage, and said, "Times have certainly changed, haven't they? Emma Goldman's pretty well off too. She has a lovely villa on the Riviera." He laughed, and said, "What makes you think I'm prosperous?" I said, "Well, I envy you your hat, and that proletarian blue shirt of yours cost more than my white one." He kept smiling, but pulled his shirt collar open, and underneath it his throat was cut from ear to ear, a deep old scar that had nearly cost him his life in Pittsburgh, where he had gone unescorted to speak some years ago, though friends and even the police warned him that an attempt was to be made against his life. He said, "I'm a little prosperous now, but I've been ragged and in gaol without a nickel often enough."

I couldn't help respecting and liking him, just as I had liked and respected Emma Goldman, though, if anybody cares to know it, I'm an old-fashioned reactionary Ogden Mills Tory black Republican. I don't really know anything about politics, and have no political ideals, affiliations, or convictions. It's merely that I own both a house and a habitable barn, and am afraid somebody might take one of them away from me. But I liked Carlo Tresca. He's so exciting and colourful a character that when *The New Yorker* did a profile of him

written by Max Eastman in 1934 it was so long that it had to run in two instalments, and they let it run. As Max said, he is the despair of all those young men whose idea of success and glory is to get arrested and sent to gaol in the cause of the working classes. Tresca holds the international all-time record in this field. He has been arrested thirty-six times, has been tried by jury seven times, has had his throat cut by a hired assassin, been shot at four times, been kidnapped by the Fascisti, and is so respected by his enemies, and even by capitalists who know him personally, that when Tresca wanted to go down to Paterson, N.J., during the great silk strike, the silk baron, Piva, lent him his own limousine and top-hat, and he went through saluted by the police, who had been instructed to arrest him on sight. I dug that one up myself. It was not in the piece by Max Eastman.

Tresca is an intelligent pragmatist now. He knows that anarchism as a practical political creed is as archaic, outmoded, as the old oaken bucket or grandfather's clock. In countries like the United States it survives only as a philosophic idea which is curiously similar in some points to the pure, original form of Jeffersonian democracy, holding that the ideal Government should be the paid servant with no other functions than keeping roads and communications open, protecting us by police from criminals within the commonwealth, and by a paid army from aggression from outside enemies.

At any rate, what Tresca is now doing principally is lecturing against Fascism, often applauded by

audiences of good American democrats, and helping the Labour leaders in fights against capitalistic abuses rather than political forms of government. No police or Federal officers are wanting Tresca's scalp. Militant Fascists are said to be still plotting his assassination, but the American police are not interested in arresting him these days. When he works with Giovannitti, who is now almost blind from years spent in prison, with Augusto Bellanca, leader of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, with Valenti, and with Luigi Antonini, of the famous Local 89, with its headquarters on three immense floors at 218 West 40th Street, he is simply a "Labour leader" as they are.

Since both Valenti and Tresca had told me I must see Margherita di Maggio at Local 89, and since Local 89 has had more sensational publicity than any other Labour unit in the world, I kept 'phoning Miss di Maggio, and they kept 'phoning her, and I finally managed to see her.

She is an overweight, overworked, quite handsome young female Italian American, who was once a sweat-shop garment-worker herself, and who is now an executive in an office as big as a skating rink, surrounded by other offices in a floor space almost as big as an armoury, with office booths and windows like those in banks all round its periphery. The place was crowded like the steerage deck of an old-fashioned ocean liner or Ellis Island on a busy day. Miss di Maggio was taking care of eight or ten people at once, and fifty more were waiting to see her. She was inside a railing at her desk, and I made motions to her over

the heads of those who were talking with her. She said, "Come in," and gave me a cigarette and asked me to sit down . . . and went right on working. After this had continued more than half an hour and it was one o'clock I said, "You have to eat, don't you?"

She said, "Not always . . . and besides, look at me! I eat too much anyway."

I said, "Well, we can never talk here, and I want so much to talk with you. Let's go and eat a little."

She said, "I hear you met my brother," and did ten minutes' more work, and finally came along with me, first grabbing an old black coat and hat reminiscent of the days when she punched a clock. Unless you looked at her face, she resembled any of a thousand underpaid sweat-shop workers who ate too much spaghetti. She said the only restaurants in the neighbourhood were Italian, and that she was sick of wop food. So was I, because I had been eating it for a week, so I took her to the Gotham. She insisted on paying for the taxi. When we entered the British admiral in gold braid who guards the doorway and the elegant young managers in gardenias and frock-coats stared at her and wondered what I was bringing her there for. After we were seated at table, and she had got the old black coat off, and was at home there, the *maitre d'hôtel* and waiters treated her with profound respect, because she now looked like a large Roman princess from a Michelangelo painting. She demanded horse-radish and got it, accompanied with bows and apologies that it hadn't already been put on the table. It was presently the *maitre d'hôtel* who lighted her cigarette. She sighed

contentedly, and said it was the first restful moment she had had in days. She confirmed Valenti's figures that there were about 150,000 Italian-American garment-workers in the New York area alone, and was pretty cheerful about their condition. Instead of beefing about cruelty of capitalists to-day she told me in detail about the improvements in hours, wages, and working conditions that have taken place in the last few years. "In 1932 I went to Bridgeport," she said, "and it was still pretty bad. I found them working at machines from seven o'clock in the morning to seven o'clock at night, an eleven-hour working day, for as little as fifteen dollars a week. Conditions were not quite so bad in New York, but bad enough. To-day we work a forty-hour week, a decent five-day week. The minimum now runs from thirty-one dollars fifty cents on paper to about twenty-six dollars twenty-five cents actual minimum, which is about the least anybody makes. An expert can make forty-five or fifty dollars if he happens to have a good job and a good break. Sex doesn't figure in it. A woman can make as much as a man.

"Wages are fair now. Working conditions are pretty good, and the hours are absolutely okay. This has meant a lot to us Italians, for in Connecticut, for instance, 90 per cent. of all garment-workers are of Italian origin. Don't forget, though, that we had to fight for it. The Government helped some, but strikes did most of it."

I said, "What was all that hectic activity down at Local 89 this morning? And those unhappy, worried-looking people?"

She said, "Oh, that's keeping the work going, finding work for people. There isn't enough work yet for everybody. And straightening out small tangles. That's the routine."

She lighted another cigarette and finished her ice-cream, licking the spoon and smiling. "I really ought to reduce!" she said, and then continued:

"People don't understand it, but the truth is that the honest capitalists and manufacturers' associations are really working toward the same end as we are. Only a few of the employers are still really lousy. But, being a fighting organization, we have been able to keep our gains, even with them. If we had been completely passive our gains would have slid off just as they did in candy, laundry, and some of the other workers' groups which were either passive or not well organized."

I said, "Well, you've given me a pretty amiable and optimistic picture, haven't you?"

She said, "Yes, and that's the main picture to-day, but there's another side, of course. There are still factories in the East here where life is simply hell. I'll give you the name of one that I know from personal observation, and you can print the name or not as you choose. It might get you into a lawsuit, but I know you'd win it, because it's absolutely true. The man poses as a philanthropist, but he is really a sadist. The abuses he inflicts on his employees couldn't possibly be profitable. He takes pleasure in it. He gets an emotional kick out of it. The girls sit in rows, and mustn't talk or smile or turn their heads, and the fore-



men are thugs who actually run into the ladies' toilets and pull the girls out when they think they've stayed too long. The men garment-workers in this factory continually get, 'You son of a bitch, you wop, you dirty dago,' whispered more often than shouted, and the worker has to take it or lose his job, and there aren't enough jobs yet to go around. With the girls they have other methods, which we won't go into. They have to take it or quit, and there aren't enough jobs yet. I've given you that picture just because it's the worst, and I've told you it's rare. Most big business men care mostly about money, and realize that contented workers do better work than abused, unhappy ones."

She told me that home conditions had improved, too. She had relatives who were still garment-workers, and if I went with her to their apartments, she said, I'd find the same comfort, cheerfulness, and modest conveniences that you'd find in any other American flat or house where the wage-earner is making a hundred to two hundred dollars a month.

I said when we parted, "Then, why is your Antonini still so rampageous? The newspapers called Roosevelt a Communist sympathizer because he had anything to do with Antonini at all."

"Good Lord," said Margherita, "Luigi is proletarian, he is for labour, but he's no more Bolshevik than you or I. The truth is that Local 89 is Antonini's baby, it's his pet, and he's sometimes just like an old female bear protecting its cub."

I went on to Bridgeport, in New England, mulling

over what Margherita di Maggio had told me, and checking on all of it I could. I am not wanting to be optimistic or trying to glorify foreign-language race groups, or even give them a clean bill of health on the issue of Communistic or Red revolution which Americans hear about as a continual bugbear. I'm trying, on the contrary, to report and analyse. And what I feel I have discovered about the Italian-American Labour groups and their leaders is basically that a sharp distinction must often be made between Labour Radicals, even when they are violent, and political revolutionists. There seem to be from a hundred thousand to a quarter of a million Italian-American workers and Labour leaders who are ready to fight on the drop of a hat against what they regard as the abuses and injustices of the capitalistic system, but the element which is out to *destroy* capitalism is so slight that I believe it to be negligible, and the Italian-American individuals who are active, militant political *revolutionists*, wanting to overthrow the Government, can be checked down, I believe, to around a thousand individuals in all, out of a three- or four-million total. Their names and activities are known to the Federal authorities and often to the police. They do not have the support of the Italian-American Labour unions, and for these two reasons, as well as because of their microscopic numerical strength, they are nothing for anybody to have nightmares about.

I think you can find more "parlour Reds" per capita in Harvard, Smith, Vassar, Barnard, almost any liberal American institution of higher learning you choose to name, than you can find actual revolutionists

among any foreign-language race group in America, and it happens, though I don't know whether it necessarily proves anything, that the Mooneys, Huey Longs, Earl Browders, Father Coughlins, John L. Lewises, are seldom of foreign-language origin, though the man who shot McKinley was.

New England . . . Bridgeport . . . Joe Racioppi, who had known the workers for a lifetime and is welcome in their homes. We went in the rain, at night, to "the Hill," and first called on Arturo Grassi, a factory-worker, not a foreman, with a family of five. The house was neat, a painted bungalow with a porch and an electric bell. Arturo and his wife both came to the door. She was in her apron, had been finishing the dishes, and, since my friend Joe was at home there, we all went back into the kitchen, where she heated some coffee. The kitchen was spotless white, partly white tile, gas-range, electric ice-box, tinware, and aluminium—in other words, 100 per cent. American. Mr and Mrs Grassi were talking voluble Italian, which I understand reasonably well—but I was in an American kitchen. A seventeen-year-old son and a fifteen-year-old daughter came to see who the visitors were, and were so American they were embarrassed, and protested that we should have been received in the parlour. We went on into the parlour. It was 100 per cent. American too—yet not quite. There was a big plaster imitation-bronze bust of Mussolini on the upright piano beside a big plaster imitation-bronze bust of President Roosevelt. There was Whistler's *Mother* on the wall, there

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were Morris chairs, a sofa, standing lamps with bright-coloured shades. I have lived in Italian workmen's houses in Italy. This was not merely better, it was infinitely better. It was totally different. They know this. It has been their main reason for coming to America. The boy had gone through high school, and was working in a grocery store. The girl was still in high school, and was going to be a stenographer.

I said to the father, "Are you Fascist?"

"*Dio mio!* Me? I'm a Democrat. I voted for Roosevelt."

"Then why the bust of Mussolini?"

He laughed and said, "If you were old enough you'd know why. When I come over forty years ago my uncle in Brooklyn had a statue of George Washington and one of Garibaldi, standing beside each other. Mussolini is our new Italian hero. But I'm Democrat, and I'm afraid my son here is turning Socialist, he hates the Fascists so much. He hates the Fascists, and doesn't like to see Mussolini on the piano there."

We dropped into other homes on "the Hill," and bumped, by pure chance, into something that was like high poetry or a vision from the Book of Revelation. One name my countrymen use for the vast, complex, still seething, American civilization is the "Melting Pot." It is a meaningful symbol, but vast, impersonal, abstract. Well, that night I saw the "Melting Pot" almost as old Ezekiel saw the "Wheel"—close up, personified, incarnate, all in one small kitchen basement.

Joe had driven, still in the rain, into the yard of a

small two-story frame house farther out. He had been saving it for the last because these were his best friends. The house was dark except that a little light was showing from the cellar.

Joe said, "So! They must be having a party!"

Instead of going to the front door we went round to the closed, inclined cellar door on ground-level at the back. He pounded with his foot and shouted that he had brought a friend. The doors were flung up, opened, and we looked down through a flood of light into gay, surprised faces. It was the family, some cousins, and friend of the family, whose head was an elderly, one-time Sicilian, now an American construction foreman. Three generations were there, men and women, boys and girls, and we all talked and were gay, and some drank wine, and could even quarrel about ideas as friends do. The old man and his wife spoke English with accents redolent of Palermo, spaghetti, and Santa Lucia, and lapsed naturally into Italian whenever they could. The married son and daughter spoke with very little accent, still knew Italian, they said, but seldom used it. The third generation, the young people, were losing the Italian entirely. American was their language. A boisterous friend of the married son was violently Fascist, and wanted to make the whole world Fascist. All the older ones disagreed with him, sometimes laughing, sometimes angry, calling him a "Red," telling him he could get on a boat and go back to Italy if he felt that way. The third generation was totally indifferent, bored. They buzzed about their own affairs, which included

high-school activities and a pending vaudeville performance in "3 Big Acts," for charity, by the parish of St Michael's. Their mamma tried to stop them from selling us tickets, but we bought two, for twenty-five cents each. The climax came when I asked the name of a tall youth who had been more or less silent. He was a Swedish-American plasterer, and his name was Sven, and he was engaged to the prettiest of the daughters, named Carlotta. Sven was pure blond Nordic and stolid; Carlotta was brunette, vivacious, starry-eyed; and their babies will be pure American, probably never learning a word of either Swedish or Italian. I'll never think of the Melting Pot any more as a vast impersonal symbol. I'll always think of it as Sven and Carlotta. . . .

I said to Joe, as we drove away, "You've only been showing me the prosperous ones, those who have steady jobs. Aren't a lot of them still on relief? Aren't a lot of them having hard sledding?"

He said, "Yes, about the same proportion as other working groups, I think—but that reminds me, there's one more family I'd like to show you if they're still awake—down near the centre of the town. They lost their factory jobs when factories closed down, and instead of solving it by going on relief have handled it in a different way, more Italian than American. I hope they're still awake. His name is Orazio Curri. He came from Albora Bella, in Eastern Italy. They're what you call peasants over there, but his great-great-grandfather was an armourer, and his people had been

workers in wrought iron from generation to generation. He came here young, and had a good job in one of the big sewing-machine factories, which closed down with the depression. He had a large family, had saved no money, and was in a spot. Around 1930, with no job, he had to move out of his bungalow. He rented, for almost nothing, a tumbledown frame tenement with no furnace, no improvements, no heat, no anything. All it had was a roof that didn't leak and a lot of space. He needed the space, for he had eight children, including two grown sons who followed the traditional family trade. They pooled their few dollars, bought an anvil, a few tools which they couldn't make, made themselves other tools, put up a shed in the backyard, and started working in hand-wrought iron—went back to their ancestral craft. They had a rough time and nearly starved, because you could buy a good machine-made imitation of a hand-wrought iron lamp or candlesticks for a couple of dollars in any department store. But some people know and care for the difference, and they finally got a break. I hope they're still awake."

We drove up to a four-story tenement shack with a light in the top windows. Old man Curri came clattering slowly downstairs, surprised to see us. The first two floors were ice-cold, black, completely empty, silent as the grave. His own grown sons and their families were behind closed doors asleep on the third floor. The fourth floor was bright, warm, and cheery, heated with oil-stoves, with pipes that led into the chimney. The kitchen was the living-room. It was like camping. The old lady made coffee and poured

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*grappa* into it. They had no modern improvements. It might have been a house of sixty years ago, but they were warm, independent, sheltered, and not hungry. No housing laws were being violated, because Curri had leased it. Otherwise it would have stood empty. We clattered down to the basement presently, where he had a crude showroom and a show-window, and a sign which said in English, "Masters of Metal Arts." In the window and inside were lamps, candlesticks, lanterns, grilles, hearth shovels and tongs, and some work he was just finishing for a Bridgeport Society woman. He took us through the mud and rain, now nearly midnight, to his forge and shop in the shed in the backyard, and we might have been in Italy a hundred years ago. The form of the tools they had made, the bellows even, the way things were arranged, smelled of old-world medieval crafts and guilds.

I said, "You must be doing pretty well now. You must be making pretty good money."

I was thinking that their camping facilities upstairs were still rather rudimentary. Maybe he knew what I was thinking, but he merely nodded his head, and said, "Not so bad." It was Joe who said, "You see, Mr Curri is sending his youngest son to Columbia."

I suppose I should mention that Joe is the Reverend Joseph Racioppi, Rector of Trinity, the richest and most fashionable High Episcopal church in Bridgeport. He is Cornell. His pretty young wife is the daughter of a D.A.R. Social Register dowager, and Joe happens to be Protestant because his ancestors in Northern Italy were Waldensians. In settlement work he and the



Roman Catholic priests are friends, and most of Joe's buddies among the Italian working people are Catholics.

Among the Italian Americans in that part of New England Joe told me of Dr William F. Verdi, famous surgeon and Professor of Surgery at Yale, past President of the New Haven Board of Education; of Epiphano and Frasinelli, biggest building contractors in the state; of old Sebastiano Poli, of New Haven, who began with an organ-grinder's monkey and ended by selling a chain of theatres to William Fox for 30,000,000 dollars—but said, "The person I really want you to meet before you get out of this territory is a midwife named Augustina B——. There are plenty of Italian millionaires, contractors, and surgeons, but there aren't many like her left, either here or in Italy. She's giving a party Saturday night. I can't go, but I think you ought to, and I think I can fix it for you."

The Signora Augustina lived in a tenement in a factory district 'way down the Post Road, and Joe 'phoned me next day that a man named Guffino would call at the hotel and take me in a car. Guffino was a strange young fellow, very serious, very nice, not very well educated. He was as ceremonious as an ambassador. I said, "All right, let's go." He said, "What do you mean, let's go? You're not dressed." I said, "What do you mean, I'm not dressed?" He said, "You must put on your tuxedo." He was wearing tan shoes, a striped suit, and purple shirt, but I did as he told me, and we went, and it was her birthday, and her apartment was crowded with Italians, but only two of

the men were wearing what looked like hired dress suits, though most of the ladies were arrayed in all their finery . . . except Signora Midwife. Buxom, elderly, still handsome, she was in the kitchen with an apron covering her from chin to ankles, superintending the biggest kettle of spaghetti I've ever seen outside of Naples. Guffino was proud of having produced what he called a famous *autore Americano*, tuxedo and all, and I was happy to be there.

I was happier still after the telephone had rung while we were at dinner. I was on our hostess's left. She was still in her apron, standing up, ladling out the spaghetti, while I had been getting dizzy looking at the walls covered with votive offerings, paintings, embroideries, plaques, mottoes, from grateful parents of babies she had delivered. When the 'phone rang she disappeared, and in a few minutes came back in a bright green silk dress and a huge picture hat with spangles. She waved to us, put on her coat, and was gone a couple of hours, while we finished dinner. We were having coffee, and some of the guests were playing games, and some of them were singing *Santa Lucia*, when she came hurrying in as she had hurried out and said, "It was a boy!" Then she put her apron over the silk dress and filled herself full of spaghetti which had been kept hot for her in the kitchen. I was glad Joe had sent me to see her, instead of the world-famous surgeon, and I'm sure Dr Verdi will forgive me if he ever reads this.

But choosing between Dr Verdi, of Yale, and the midwife reminded me that, no matter how much

enjoyment and information I'd been getting from workers, artisans, *il popolo*, shoeshine men, barbers, and midwives, I'd have to busy myself sooner or later with their upper crust, also their outstanding successful men, women, and celebrities, in order to present a balanced picture of Italians in America. So I went back for a while to New York, planning to learn what I could about the "big shots" in finance, politics, art, culture, and religion before I got going again with my friends, "the people," out on the market gardens, in the orchards and vineyards.

I wanted, first of all, to meet the legendary, famous, powerful Gene Pope—Generoso Pope—who had begun as a water-boy on a road gang, and was now a multi-millionaire, the most talked-of Italian American among themselves. Some of my worker friends had told me he was "wonderful," and that one of the first things he had done with his big money was to install a complete municipal electric-light plant free, as a gift, in Arpaize, Benevento, the Italian village where he had been born. It's true, by the way. Other workers thought he was a devil with horns and a tail. One told me the reason Pope had six secretaries was because he couldn't write his own name, and another said that although Gene Pope had bought *Il Progresso* and *Il Corriere*, the two leading Italian-American dailies, whose circulation runs towards a hundred thousand, he couldn't read a word of what was in his own newspapers, even in Italian! A lot of the radical workers said he was an illiterate go-getter who cared only for

money, but none of them, curiously, suggested that he had gained his wealth either crookedly or by grinding down the poor. He had gone into the sand-and-gravel business, made a big success of it, and at the beginning of Jimmy Walker's *régime* began supplying practically all the sand and gravel for the sidewalks of New York and for most of its big new buildings. It was good sand and gravel, delivered at fair prices, so that he still does it despite changing administrations, and is now head of the biggest sand-and-gravel combine in the entire world. I discovered, after three days' trying, that this Gene Pope was harder to see than the Pope of Rome. Finally I got an appointment to see one of his secretaries and went to 521 Fifth Avenue. Instead of office numbers the index board said, "Pope, Gene . . . Entire Thirty-first Floor." I stepped out of the elevator into a luxuriously furnished little foyer, and began to look round in amazement, because it was absolutely empty and silent, not a human soul in sight, not even a reception girl's desk or telephone. Then I spied a small closed wooden window in an otherwise blank, heavily panelled wall, and saw a little bell beside it, and poked it. The heavy wooden shutter opened an inch, and I saw what seemed to be a pretty girl's nose. I said I had an appointment to see Miss Schiapelli. The girl smiled sweetly, opening the shutter half an inch more, told me I was Mr Seabrook, and closed the shutter again. I lighted a cigarette and began to look round at big framed photographs of a dark, handsome, youngish fellow of about forty who was bound to be Gene Pope . . . Times Wide World, Associated Press, and

other news-shot groups which showed the former road-gang water-boy laughing with Jim Farley, having an intimate breakfast with President Roosevelt, banqueting with Balbo, in a huddle with Mussolini, playing pinochle with Cardinal Hayes. I guess it wasn't pinochle, but it was a close-up showing him and the Cardinal as buddies. I thought it was pretty good for a gentleman whose detractors said couldn't even read or write, and made up my mind I was going to see him in spite of hell and high water.

So when I got inside to see Miss Schiapelli, who turned out to be a blonde lady with a cultured voice, in which she was explaining why I couldn't see Mr Pope, I said, "You know, it would be just too wonderful if you really didn't let me see him."

She stiffened as if she had been hit by an electric shock, and said, "What do you mean?"

I said, "Well, I saw his Holiness the Pope of Rome, had a nice fifteen-minute interview with him. It would be just too wonderful if I really couldn't see your Pope. It would make a better chapter than anything I could get by seeing him."

She stared at me with her big eyes, almost smiled, and said, "I guess you'd better wait a minute."

In less than three minutes she was back and said, "Come on—but please don't stay too long, even if he lets you. He's so piled up now that he's going to have to work until at least nine o'clock to-night. I know it, if he doesn't."

She opened a door, and I was alone in a big office with a boyish, clean-shaven, perfectly and quietly

tailored, dark-haired man with eyes like black velvet, who sat at a flat desk bare of papers, lighting an Egyptian cigarette with a gold lighter, offering me one, smiling as if he had all the time in the world, saying in a pleasant voice without a trace of accent, "Won't you sit down?" I told him what I was doing, and he said he thought it was a fine idea. I was in one of the quietest and most impressive private offices I have ever been in. The whole set-up would have been in good taste for a king or a prime minister, so I'm not saying it wasn't in good taste for a former water-boy. He was certainly at home in it, suave, and tranquil.

I said, "Why were you so hard to see?"

He said, "I didn't know anything about it until a minute ago. The secretaries have to protect me, or I'd never get any work done."

I said, "Why did you buy *Il Progresso* and *Il Corriere*?"

He said, "Well, because the thing I'm most interested in is my own people here in America, and in making good American citizens out of them. It's the same reason why I'm president of I don't know how many civic and fraternal organizations, which I help all I can."

I said, "How much do you work . . . how many hours . . . those civic and fraternal activities, your businesses . . . everything?"

He said, "I'm often in the office here until nearly midnight."

"How much sleep do you get?"

"About five hours—not more on the average."

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"How do you keep your health?"

"I play golf three times a week at the Westchester Country Club and work in the gym in the New York Athletic Club, and go down to Aiken or Augusta in the winter whenever I can get a break. You must come out to Westchester and have a round with me next summer."

I thanked him, and asked, "What do you shoot?"

He looked embarrassed, hesitated, and said, "As a matter of fact, I'm generally under eighty. It's the game I care most about."

"What else do you care most about?"

He said, "Well, work, golf, and what you might call social things, though I don't mean Society; I mean people."

I thought of the pictures outside on the wall, and thought I understood him. I said, "They tell me you have butlers, flunkies, footmen, and a staff of servants as large as Mrs Astor's."

He looked embarrassed again, and said, "It doesn't matter, but I suppose I have got a good many."

"Why do you have so many?"

He said, "Do you really want to know? My wife had to do all the cooking and washing when we were poor. She worked as hard as I did, never complained, has stuck to me through thick and thin, has borne me fine children—my oldest boy's in Columbia—and now I want her to have everything, everything she can have. It's all for her, really."

I said, "Are you happy?"

He said, "I certainly am. I was happy when I went

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back to Italy on a visit and met Mussolini, and the Pope of Rome, and Balbo gave me a big banquet, but I think the happiest I've ever been is the moment I became a full-fledged American citizen. America has done everything for me."

Gene Pope, with his vast wealth, has done a good deal for Italians, both Italian Americans and the peasants back home, and in addition to giving him a banquet in Rome they made him Grand Officer of the Order of the Crown of Italy and Commander of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre.

As I left him and thanked him he told me I should be sure and go to see Ercole Locatelli, the Gorgonzola cheese king.

Going away, I reflected that Artisan Curri and Millionaire Pope had two things in common. They were both of peasant origin, and both were sending their sons to a big American university. Mr Locatelli, however, turned out to be "a totally different breed of cat," which is their way of saying "horse of another colour" in the Piedmont. He is the product of a powerful family, cultured as well as rich, as much interested in the fine arts as in cheeses; transplanted from big business in Italy to big business in America, housed in a marble building that looks like a bank at 27 Varick Street, with branches in London and Buenos Aires, controlling nearly all of the cheese import from Italy, and controlling also its principal manufacture back there. I had gone to his office for information about cheese and spaghetti and olive oil, but found a gentleman who was more interested in art and books,



more interested in what I was doing than in what he was doing. There were Frederick Remington bronzes, some five or six famous ones, the originals, there in his office. He had been Remington's friend as well as a collector. There were etchings from San Marino. He took me to the top floor to show me more, in the San Marino Consulate.

I said, "Do you lease this part of the building to them?"

He blushed, and said, "No, I'm the Consul-General of San Marino."

He showed me a collection of stamps, and when I asked him about them he blushed again and said, "Yes, I'm a philatelist; won a first prize at the International Philatelic Congress."

I almost forgot to ask him about the cheeses. He had imported 28,452,000 pounds the year before, Parmesan, Gorgonzola, Bel Paese, Romano, which is as hard as a rock, like Parmesan. About 60 per cent. of all the cheese imported from all countries to America comes from Italy. He told me that 35,829,000 pounds of olive oil had been imported from Italy the previous year, and about 30,000,000 from Spain.

"You must run across the street to the Italian Chamber of Commerce and meet Dr Bonaschi."

"Thank you, and please tell me about Dr Bonaschi. Is he its President?"

Mr Locatelli looked embarrassed again, and said, "No, I am the President of it, but Dr Bonaschi really runs it." So I went over to see Dr Bonaschi, who proved to be still another "different breed of cat."

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Dr Albert Bonaschi, LL.D., M.A., Ph.D., etc., if you please, from the University of Milano, Professor in Italy, Instructor in the College of the City of New York, member of the N. Y. Board of Education, chairman of the Teachers' Retirement Board, American citizen since 1906, was a large, important gentleman, on the pompous side at first, as Doctors of Letters are likely to be, but soon cordial, friendly, and a gold-mine of information.

"Italian Americans in business and finance? Why, they make a whole *Who's Who*. I could give you enough for an encyclopedia, young man. I hardly know where to begin. You've heard of Giuseppe Bellanca, who makes aeroplanes; Gerli, who makes silk; Amadeo Obici, who owns all the peanuts in the North American hemisphere; but maybe you don't know that Giuseppe Faccioli is chief engineer of the General Electric, and Vincent Riggio sales boss of the American Tobacco Company. I suppose you do know that Philip Torchio is Vice-President of New York Edison?"

"No, I don't know any of it," I said; "tell me some more."

"Well, it's that way all over the country—the Grassellis with their huge chemical plant in Cleveland; Count Pio Crespi down in Texas, a monarch of the fig and cotton industry; and then there are the Vaccaro brothers, the Standard Fruit and Steamship Company down in New Orleans. The boss was Luca, who died a little while ago—a vast banana empire with a fleet second only to the United Fruit Company. Then there's the Di Giorgio Line out of New York and San-

Francisco. In Chicago there's H. Fabbri, born there, once a messenger boy and now the head of one of the biggest metal companies. There's John F. Cuneo in Chicago, grandson of an immigrant, who owns the biggest printing establishment in the world; d'Esposito, born in Italy, chief engineer of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and general manager of the Chicago Union Station. Out in St Louis you have Guido Pantaleoni, born in Italy, wealthy banker; Joseph Garavelli, who has made fame and fortune out of restaurants. Of course, out on the west coast you have all the wine-growers and Amadeo Peter Giannini, who bought the Bank of America, and then blanketed America with the branch banks of his Trans-America Corporation; you've got Al Capone out there too, if you want to mention him, and Mayor Rossi of San Francisco. Al was in big business, all right! "

I said, "I don't quite know what to do about Al Capone. He'd make a whole book by himself."

Dr Bonaschi unbent farther, chuckled a little, and said, "Well, the Federal agents knew what to do with him. But let's be serious. You've seen Generoso Pope, of course. Now you must see the Paternos."

"Who are they?" I asked.

"*Ma che!*" he spluttered. "They are the biggest building promoters in New York City. Dr Charles Paterno came from Italy when he was a kid and went to Cornell Medical School, but never did much doctoring, though everybody still calls him doctor. He had a genius for building promotion. He built the entire block of apartments at 270 Park Avenue, the

whole block between 48th and 49th Streets, all the way through to Madison. He built a suburban colossus they call Hudson View Gardens across the river on the Palisades. He has built literally hundreds of apartment buildings in New York, and he built himself Paterno Castle at 180th Street on upper Riverside Drive, with its great retaining walls that everybody stares at . . . with an electric pipe organ, a rotunda fountain, and a huge mushroom cellar. His two brothers, Joseph and Michael, have built 22,000,000 dollars' worth of stuff on Morningside Heights alone! "

I thanked Dr Bonaschi, went away suitably overwhelmed, and he mailed me volumes more. When I went out to the Casa Italiana, which is the Italian Department at Columbia University, I found Joseph Paterno's name heading the bronze plaque over the doorway, and learned that Charles had given them 15,000 volumes and a lot of priceless furniture from Italy. When Dr Charles Paterno's son married the daughter of an Italian-American Tammany judge in 1934 every political New York notable was there. Monsignor Arcese married them, both the Ponselle girls sang, and Eddie Duchin played for the dancing. A lot of these big Italians give away their money as well as make it. Giannini gave the University of California the million and a half dollars which built the Hall on the campus which bears his name.

At the end of this day in New York, when I got out of a subway built by Italian labour to go to my hotel apartment built by Italian promoters, walking

along sidewalks built with the sand Gene Pope had turned into gold, in shoes shined by an Italian, and probably made by one, not to mention my clothes, which it was a more than even bet had been made by Italian garment-workers, I began to see this city of New York in a new light—and the Italian Americans too. They have certainly helped build America while building their own prosperity in the land of their adoption.

Of course, they help run it, too. Everybody knows that Fiorello La Guardia is again Mayor of New York, and that Judge Ferdinand Pecora is probably the most important judge of the New York Supreme Court, but I didn't know there were a dozen or so other Italian-American Federal and Supreme Court judges, fifty of all sorts, nine fairly high Federal Government officials, and twenty Italian-American mayors of other cities.

Gino said, "But don't forget there's another Italian America, *per Bacco!* You mustn't overlook the push-carts, tenements, *trattorias*, and old women in bright-coloured shawls. East Harlem is still America's Little Italy No. 1, and Mulberry, Bleecker, Grand Streets are just as much part of the picture as your mayors, Supreme Court judges, and multimillionaires."

"All right," I said, so we hopped into the subway to stroll and lunch on the Lower East Side. I was getting an eye-, ear-, and nose-ful of the usual sights, sounds, and smells—I don't mean stinks either, but pleasant odours of chicory roasted with coffee, *sigari toscani*,

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Chianti, and garlic—when we passed a little window on Grand Street which said:

### CAPICI SIGAR CO.

*Sigari di Venezia*

I stopped because the window was full of clay pipes with long cherry stems, and because I saw a grandmother inside with a baby in her arms, while young people who looked like members of the family were making cigars. It was an intimate, family, domestic scene, right there behind the plate-glass, on the city sidewalk. So we went in, and Gino was surprised, and they were surprised too, because old man Capici was bowing and shaking hands with him and welcoming him. An eighteen-year-old son now came, and turned out to be a student who had met Gino with Dino out at the university. The whole family with their tiny dump on Grand Street, including two young daughters and some cousins who couldn't yet speak English, were making cigars to send the oldest boy through college.

Bookstore windows farther along were bright with chromos of Pretty Red Wing, September Morn, Ivory Soap babies, and trashy American sheet music. Over the door of the Libreria Italiana at 145-147 Mulberry Street was Mussolini in an iron helmet, modern Cæsar, while in the window there were four Mussolinis, three George Washingtons, and two Madonnas.

We went in to see the proprietor, and I said, "What, no Garibaldis?"

The boss laughed and said, "This new generation has forgotten him."

There were books of all sorts, including philosophy and some of Victor Hugo's sensational ones in Italian with dime-novel lithograph jackets, but the greatest seller among Italian Americans, and the biggest stock, despite sons now sent to universities, is always Carolina Invernizio, who is the Ethel M. Dell, the Bertha Clay, the super-Elinor Glyn of Italy. This store had nearly a hundred of her concoctions with reeking jackets and titles: *The Love which Killed*, *Accursed Love*, *The Atrocious Vision*, *The Kiss of Infamy*, *Dora, the Murderer's Daughter*, *The Crime of the Countess*, *The Bridegroom of the Dead*, *The Bandit's Secret*, *The Robber's Sweetheart*, *The Bastard Child*, *Fatal Woman* (in two volumes), *The Beautiful Maniac's Revenge*, *Fatal Passion*, *Little Martyrs*, *The Female Satan, or the Hand of Death!* Finally she had turned modern on us and given us *Murder in an Automobile* (for seventy-five cents). The titles are even more juicy in Italian, and if I hadn't been compelled to keep on writing books myself to make a living I'd have abandoned authorship and spent the rest of my life reading hers.

Gino stopped next with me in a big food-store which had Mortadella sausages and beautiful pure white cheeses in transparent white bladders being bought by beautiful pure white nuns in opaque black. I was disappointed that most of the wine was domestic red ink and Chianti (type) from California.

The proprietor said, "You can't blame my customers, or me either. This costs forty cents a bottle instead of two or three dollars."

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We presently reached 198 Grand Street, Mario Ristaino's restaurant, and when we went in I didn't think much of it because it seemed commonplace, with commonplace waiters and clients. But Gino kept right on going, through the dining-room, then up a couple of steps past the cashier's desk, through another door into a big room that made me think I was back in Rome or Milan. It was full of Italian-American police lieutenants, detectives off duty, bankers and doctors, business men, priests and nuns, potted palms and tables where groups had lunched and were now playing cards. The elder Ristaino had died a few years ago, but we were welcomed by his robust son, who had hair like a seal and big, dark eyes, very handsome. Gino took me to the "round-table," which was long and rectangular, where the journalists and bankers congregated. It wasn't far from where the nuns were lunching, four of them at a table, and doing themselves very well indeed. They were in pointed hats, black robes, of fine, expensive material, and were obviously ladies. They turned out to be Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary from Scranton, Pennsylvania. At our own table I was introduced all round and kidded. This was a mid-week working day, and they drank no wine at all, which I thought was interesting. They were all wine-drinkers, they said, and drank on holidays and always with their dinners in the evening. They ate rather abstemiously, and, remembering the enormous luncheons with wine which prosperous gentlemen of this sort eat habitually in Italy, I thought it was an interesting concession to the



perhaps busier and healthier *tempo* of life in America. I felt that Gino had brought me into a true "spot" here in this back room, like Italy back home, yet modified by its transference to twentieth-century New York. Out front it was just a commonplace restaurant.

I believe a good journalist is the best of all guides. When I said, "What about the churches? Aren't you wops more or less all good Catholics here, same as back home?" Gino scratched his beard three seconds and said, "You must go and see Father Congedo."

I had never heard of Father Congedo, but all New York Italian Catholics know him. When the taxi-driver took me to 307 East 33rd Street, over by East River, and I told him what I was after, he said, "Father Congedo is the guy to see all right." I was staring at half a block of buff plaster ecclesiastical buildings. A plaque said, "Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary"; another plaque "Rectory: Rev. Joseph M. Congedo"; a plaque farther along said, "Immaculata High School." Across the front of the church, like the banner of a fiesta, was a streamer painted in enormous letters in bright colouring, which said, "Perpetual Novena to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal." The housekeeper in the rectory didn't want to let me see Father Congedo. She was not unique in my experience. Even though I went round backed by barrages of letters and 'phone calls from my publishers and Italian friends, they still often thought it was a racket. Gino had said, "You must yell at them sometimes. If you speak softly they will think you

want money. They have been preyed on so much by each other."

When I tried to explain to this housekeeper in mixed Italian and English she was all against letting me in. She kept saying, "I don't know nothing," and trying to push me out of the door. So I started yelling, and a priest came from upstairs. He first washed his hands of it like Pontius Pilate, but I finally persuaded him to go and find Father Congedo, who came presently, and was like a Florentine fresco of an early Christian saint. He is a product of the Pontifical Vatican Seminary in Rome (Doctor of Philosophy as well as Divinity), has been in America since 1905, and a U.S. citizen since 1911. He was ordained in America, and got one of his doctorates at St Joseph's Seminary, in Yonkers. He built the Sacred Heart School, and established the Immaculata High School, accredited by the regents of the University of the State of New York, the only Italian High School in the United States. I had come to the right place, for though he was a saint, he was obviously a practical saint and knew all the answers. He told me there were more than three million Italian Catholics in the United States, around 90 per cent. of the entire Italian population. They represent, however, less than a fifth of the twenty-one million Roman Catholics of all race origins in America, the vast majority being Irish, German, Polish.

There are forty-five Italian Roman Catholic churches in Greater New York, Father Congedo told me, and about a hundred priests. There are not more than two or three hundred Italian priests in the whole United

States. There is not a single bishop, and there are less than a dozen monsignors, of whom the principal one is Monsignor Arcese, attached to Cardinal Hayes.<sup>1</sup>

I was surprised that the Italian element was such a small minority among American Catholics, and Father Congedo said the reason people thought they were a more dominant element was probably because, being Latin Catholic, their shrines, fiestas, processions of the Blessed Virgin, were so colourful. He was a sweet, good, and happy man, practical and American now, though a saint. He showed me his high school next door, where they had all sorts of scientific equipment and a typewriter for every student.

When I thanked him, and asked him to include me in his prayers, he said, "Now, of course, you must go out and see Dr Fama in the Bronx, who will tell you about the Italian Protestants."

I don't think I had known there were any Italian Protestants to speak of. So I went out to see Dr Charles Fama, M.D., medical examiner of the Board of Estimates of the City of New York, honorary Police Surgeon, U.S. Medical Corps in the World War, with foreign service, President of the Italian National Union of Protestant Clubs, and authority on Protestant Italians in America. His home and office were

<sup>1</sup> But there are many institutions, hospitals, settlement organizations, schools, including Columbus Hospital, in New York; St John's Academy, Staten Island; a Salesian institution in New Rochelle; the Villa Victoria, at Morristown, New Jersey; also the Italian Filippini Sisters protected by Bishop Walsh of Newark; and there's St Joseph's Villa, a summer camp near New York founded by Father Congedo, which has attracted national attention.

236 East 100th Street, the Bronx, and he had told me over the 'phone to come in a hurry and he'd wait for me. The taxi-driver said afterwards it was the most mileage he'd had on his meter since he took a champagne-soused chorus girl to Atlantic City in 1927.

Dr Fama wore pearl-grey spats and what goes with them, and received me in a sun parlour, which might have been a stage setting for *Traviata* or *Tosca*—beautiful Italian furniture, statues, little marbles and bronzes, Venetian leather, and dozens of canary birds in gilded cages which chirped and sang as we talked.

He told me there were about 350,000 Italian Protestants in the United States, all stemming back to the Waldensians, who had turned Protestant in Italy during the Reformation. But now in America, he said, they were "everything from Baptists to Seventh Day Adventists." He himself was a Presbyterian. He said there were about thirty Italian Protestant institutions and churches in the East, and that nearly every city of over a million had one or two. He was raging that morning at Father Gannon, of Fordham University, who had just been quoted in the newspapers as saying that "an Italian who was not Roman Catholic must be an enemy of his race." I told him that Father Congedo hadn't felt that way, because it was Father Congedo who had sent me up there to him.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Father Congedo had also asked me to mention Italian Americans in education. On the faculties of many leading American high schools and universities are scores of brilliant teachers, but this contribution is best epitomized by the achievements of two men, Dr Henry Suzzallo, former President of the University of Washington and now director of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and Angelo Patri, who has done as

Any high-light presentation of Italian Americans must include counts and countesses, and I went to see a gentleman who, I knew, could tell me all about that angle—Alberto Garabelli, who married Donna Carla Orlando, daughter of Italy's War-time Premier, and now lives at the Waldorf, with a beautiful country home on Long Island. He is executive head of the fashionable and important Italy America Society, of which Myron C. Taylor is President, with Paul Cravath, Thomas Lamont, and a lot of other American socialites on its board of directors. It foments "an international friendship based on mutual understanding of national ideals, aspirations, contributions to science, art, and literature in Italy and America."

He was as friendly and informative, if not so saintly, as Father Congedo. He told me all about how the Italy America Society had raised 45,000 dollars for the Italian Red Cross with a concert at the Metropolitan; conducted a nation-wide lecture tour for the Princess Borghese; had sponsored Italian art exhibitions, receptions, and banquets in honour of his Royal Highness the Duke of Spoleto, Marshal Balbo, farewells to Ambassador Rosso, and welcomes to new Ambassador Fulvio Suvich. Every once in a while, also, they do something about Dante, Colombo, and the late Amerigo Vespucci. They also sponsor "the American Society of the Royal Italian Orders of St Maurice and

much in the advancement of child-training and child psychology as any American alive to-day. Leonard Covello, Principal of Benjamin Franklin High School, New York, has done marvels in immigrant community school-work. I am told that Dr Suzzallo is partly Yugoslav.

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Lazarus and of the King," some of whose Knight Commanders are Bernard M. Baruch, Cravath, Lamont, a couple of Aldriches, and did include the late Otto H. Kahn. In a long list of Commanders of the Order of the Crown of Italy occurs Bernarr Macfadden. He cited me a long list of Italian Americans in the Social Register with counts and countesses, *marcheses* and *marchesas*, not to mention princesses, and I found in it the bright, shining name of my old friend Steve Galatti, one of the organizers of the American Ambulance Field Service in the World War. I was pleased and surprised to find Steve in the Social Register, because the last time I saw him he was covered with mud in a shell-hole behind Verdun.

I should never have guessed what this Italy America Society was, unless I had happened to know Mr Garabelli. It's listed right along under "Italian" in the Manhattan 'phone book, with the Landlords' Association, the Bakeries' Federation, the Barbers' Benevolent, the Labour Education Bureau, and the Cloakmakers' Union.

I went from the Waldorf to the Italian Consulate in Rockefeller Centre, ornate as the Vatican throne-room, where Prince Colonna was Acting Consul for the time, and then out again to the Casa Italiana at Columbia, which is also engaged in fomenting "an international friendship based on mutual understanding of national ideals, aspirations, contributions to science, art, and literature in Italy and America." Some people whisper that it likewise foments pro-Fascist

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propaganda, and that Mussolini has contributed a million or so to their beautiful set-up. Whether that be true or not, it is the centre of Italian higher education and academic culture in America, with Giuseppe Prezzolini and Dino Bigongiari at its head, but also with Dr Arthur Livingston, the greatest American Italian-language authority, translator of Pareto—who hates Mussolini's guts and doesn't care who knows it—as one of the full professors. We talked, among other things, about music. They told me about Maestro Pietro Yon, America's greatest organist, who plays in St Patrick's Cathedral; of Mauro Cottoni, sometime organist with the New York Philharmonic; of Nicola Montani in Philadelphia; of well-known Italian opera singers and conductors and impresarios in New York, Chicago, and other cities; mentioned Gatti-Casazza, the late Caruso, and Scotti, the Ponselle sisters Rosa and Carmela, who were born in Connecticut. I said, "What about Italian-American composers?" and they said, "Unless you want to count Church music and jazz there aren't many important ones. But nobody of any nationality has written the great American symphony yet, has he?"

I said, "Well, what about our American jazz geniuses and modernists who have swept the world? Are there any Italian Americans like Irving Berlin, Gershwin, Whiteman, Grofe?"

They said there were plenty of famous Italian conductors and orchestra leaders in that field—Guy Lombardo, Ted Fiorito, Nick Larocca, Louis Panico, and dozens of others in the big night restaurants

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and on the air, and that Hollywood seethed with Italian-American experts in arrangement, singers, and musicians. But they more or less agreed that while Italian Americans conduct it and sing it and play it, they don't write much of the best of it.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs Victor Lenti, who knows a lot about tin-pan alley, told me to be sure not to overlook the fact that a lot of popular song-writers who had family names which sounded "like skin eruptions to the uneducated American ear" have changed them. Her own papa, for instance, became the famous Vincent Rose. Others became Robert Bager, Harry Warren. Others have taken Irish and French names.

In sum, it would seem fair to say that, coming from a fatherland whose name is synonymous with inspired melody, they've produced some good musicians in the United States, but haven't been as outstanding in American musical composition as their heritage might have promised.

In painting there seems to be a sort of parallel. They have produced some good American painters, but are not dominant.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are, of course, Italian-American composers, and some good ones, including Cesare Sodero, Mauro Cottoni, Rotoli, Buzzi-Peccia, Di Lorenzo, Savino, Florida, Giaquinto, Jacchia, Ettore Martini, Marcacci, Bimboni, Romano Romani, Bellini, Randegger, Vittorio Giannini, Spina, De Crescenzo, Fontana, Fred Cavaccioli (alias Fred N. Smith), De Luca, Dante Fiorillo, Menotti.

<sup>2</sup> The following list of Italian-American painters was cited in *Il Progresso* as proof, on the contrary, that Italian painters rank among America's greatest: Albrizio, Noci, Stella, Corbino, the late Cosenza, D'Ascenzo, Tozzi, Gerbino, Lucioni, Bagnoli, Pusteria, Cartotto, Lazzarini, Mungo Brothers, Acampora, Pizzella, Tricca, Liberti, Falanga, Margavite, Roberti, Ferrillo, Cusumano, Califano, Vianelli, Antonio Petrucci.



If this effort of mine to report high-lights fairly would seem to be disparaging towards Italian Americans at this point, I suggest that it is possibly because I may have unconsciously expected to find them more glorious in such fields because of the glow cast by the Italian Renaissance across the centuries.

What I was able to learn about them in the field of sculpture shows them fairly dominant in the kind that adorns parks, avenues, public squares, and buildings. From the time of Constantino Brumaldi, who was the Michelangelo of the Capitol at Washington, right on to Attilio Piccirilli's comparatively recent bas-reliefs of Rockefeller Center and Leo Lentelli's architectural sculpture on many big buildings, they have gone in heavily and successfully for this sort of art without having produced a contemporary sculptor quite so outstanding, perhaps, as Paul Manship or the late MacMonnies—both of Anglo-Saxon extraction.

Onorio Ruotolo, Director of the Leonardo da Vinci Art School and himself a distinguished sculptor, resents, perhaps justly, my opinion that the Italians are more outstanding in big business than in the arts in America.<sup>1</sup> Yet I couldn't help being disappointed again when I tried to check up the high-lights in Italian-American literature. Maybe I wanted an American Dante or d'Annunzio. What they offered me instead

<sup>1</sup> Other names suggested by Mr Ruotolo include two more Piccirillis—Furio and Orazio—the late Vincenzo Alfano, Faggi, Bufano, Novani, Salemmi, Nicolosi, Salvatore, De Marco, Cesare, Maldarelli, Teresa Scaravaglione, Beretta, Montana, Famiglietti, De Francesci, Stea, Fasano, De Filippi, Tagliabue, Massari, Giacomantonio, Viafora, Novelli, and Abbate.

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was Arturo Giovannitti, Antonio Calitri, Stanco, Romano, Cautela, Forgione, Ruggiero, Winwar.

I discovered, however, a great many Italian Americans, including some of the gentlemen at the Casa Italiana, who, instead of denying that the greatest Italian art contribution to America has been in cooking, admit the thesis and speculate on the "why" of it. I kept asking everybody why, and one frequent answer was that their masses came late, and had been in America a shorter time than other race groups. Another answer was that most of them had been very poor in Italy, that they came to America as the land of economic opportunity, the land of the dollar. Another was—and I'm quoting Italian Americans—that at the peak of immigration "We got the scum of Sicily and the south."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This peak came later than any other foreign-language peak, around 1901 to 1910. In 1880 there were less than a quarter of a million Italian immigrants in the United States, and in 1890 there were less than half a million, and as late as 1900 there were still less than a million, and then the figure leaped. It leaped to over two million in a short decade, has been dropping rapidly ever since, until, with immigration restrictions in America and a new Fascist Italy over there, the trickle is negligible.

But this means immigrants born in Italy. Nobody knows how many American citizens there are now with Italian blood. They've intermarried, and many of them have changed their names. A guess is over four million, and another guess is over five million. These guesses may be beneath the mark, because small mass immigrations after the period of exploration began coming as early as 1566, when Peter Stuyvesant bought a tract of land for them on the Delaware. In 1670 another colony settled at Stony Brook, Staten Island. In 1700 another crowd came with the French Huguenots and colonized Henrico County, Virginia. Maryland crown land invited Italians, and by 1700 had artisans, vintners, and a few professional men. Oglethorpe brought some to Georgia in 1733, and Thomas Jefferson's friend Mazzei brought another colony to Virginia in the eighteenth century. From 1800

But not all of my Italian-American acquaintances would admit that negligence of the creative arts in America was due to the lateness, poverty, or inferior quality of the immigration tide. There were plenty of flamboyant fellows who blame it all on the Americans. One of these was the magnificent Alfredo Salmaggi, who was once a cobbler, is now the most picturesque of all Italian-American impresarios, and has hair longer than Samson's. He floated the Manhattan Opera Company, and now puts on popular-price performances of *Aida* with elephants at the Hippodrome. He shouted at me in a restaurant where I sat beside him at table that Italians have not produced any sublime art in America because America is imbecile, barbarian, crude, dollar-crazy; consequently no real art could thrive or be appreciated there! I asked Salmaggi if he had ever heard of the Eastern School of Music, in Rochester, the Juilliard School, in New York, if he had ever been to Carnegie or Town Hall and seen audiences not only listening to Beethoven and Haydn, but to music composed in America by Americans—including Gershwin and Paul Whiteman. I asked him if he had ever heard of Cadman, of MacDowell, of the American radio audience's increasing love for Bach, and what the American universities were now doing in music.

"*Che porcheria!*" he shouted angrily, and picked up a knife, and laughed and cut me the half of a pear he

to 1850 came mostly fruit-importers, political exiles, musicians, singers, painters, priests. After 1850 came a small vanguard of day labourers, railroad-workers, vendors of plaster statuettes, and organ-grinders with monkeys. It wasn't until after 1900 that the mob came.

was eating, and said, "You, you're not as imbecile as most Americans, anyway! You must come and see me some time."

Salmaggi has nine fine children, all good Americans, I hope. He is not so crude as he was when he used to mend shoes, but a superb character with plenty of brains, a great popular impresario, and by far the handsomest man I ever good-naturedly quarrelled with.

Present at table with Salmaggi were my friend Gino Bigongiari and some Italian gentlemen interested in sports. They asked if we had done anything about that, and Gino said, "I don't know one di Maggio from the other, but my brother Mario would know all about that if I knew where to find him."

I said, "Well, let's find him—he's your brother."

Gino telephoned angrily all over Manhattan, and finally hung up the receiver and said, "Now you go to the buildings on Broadway across from the Capitol movie, only it hasn't got any entrance on Broadway—you'll have to go up in an elevator around the corner from 54th Street, and go up to the Dusek wrestling office, and tell them you have to see Mario."

I went and found the office, full of cigar smoke and men with their coats off, and Czechoslovakian wrestlers who looked like gorillas. They produced Mario reluctantly out of an inside private office, where he acted as interpreter and adviser for the company. I explained that I wanted some Italian high-lights, and the first thing he thought of was that Gene Sarazen, former national open golf champion, once called himself Eugenio Saraceni; that Tony Manero, the national

professional champion, was, of course, Italian, and also Johnny Rivolta, former Miami open champion.

Sarazen's anglicized name reminded Mario that Jim Flynn, the "Pueblo Fireman" (the only prizefighter who ever knocked Jack Dempsey cold), was a "wop." So was Johnny Wilson, born Giovanni Panici, once world champion middleweight. Vince Dundee, Scotch-plaid name and all, great welterweight, was another "wop," born in Baltimore, and Lou Ambers, lightweight world champion, was born in Rome (New York) and christened Luigi d'Ambrosio. Mike Dundee, of Chicago, with the harp hung on his kilts, featherweight champ some years ago, was a "wop" born in Chicago. The former Olympic flyweight champion Fidel La Barba, born in California, had kept his "wop" name.

I said, "Mario, what does 'wop' mean? Where did they get it?"

He said, "It's really *guapo*, of Spanish philological origin, I think, but common around Naples and all Mediterranean ports, and it doesn't mean what you Americans think. It means an Italian all right, or other Latin, but it means a well-dressed fellow, a lavish spender, not exactly dude, more like what you Americans used to mean when you said 'a sport.'" He told me "dago" came from "Diego," and that nobody was sure where "guinea" came from, but that in England in the eighteenth century a guinea meant any Levantine. He said he didn't know why, and didn't believe Frank Vizetelly knew either—Frank Vizetelly being merely the editor-in-chief of the *Standard Dictionary*.

Then Mario said, "By the way, I never thought of that, but wop means the same thing as 'macaroni.'"

I said, "What do you mean, 'wop' is the same as 'macaroni'?"

He said, "I don't mean the macaroni you eat. Did you ever hear 'Yankee Doodle came to town, riding on a pony . . . stuck a feather in his hat and called him macaroni'? That is, he called himself a macaroni. Macaroni was a regular eighteenth-century word in England for a dude, a fop, a well-dressed, rich young fellow. But you don't hear macaroni even in England any more, and when you Americans say 'wop' you think you mean a section hand in overalls."<sup>1</sup>

I had trouble getting Mario back again from philology to sports. Some good-looking girls had been coming in and out, wives of the big wrestlers maybe, and Mario had been talking to them in various languages, and I said, "Look here, you seem to know Broadway pretty well—you seem to be up to your neck in it. Maybe you can tell me about Italian theatres and Italian radio." He said, "The Italian theatres are

<sup>1</sup> He also mentioned Gino Garibaldi, Sicilian-born, in St Louis, one of the ranking five wrestlers; Jumping Joe Savoldi, former Notre Dame football star, now a wrestler; Jack Medici, Washington University swimming champion. "Of course you know that Ralph de Palma and Peter de Paolo, the Indianapolis auto race winners, are both Italians." In baseball, in addition to the di Maggios, he mentioned Crosetti, short-stop for the Yankees, Tony Lazzeri, second baseman, born in San Francisco. He told me "Abbey" Abbaticchio, the great Pittsburgh short-stop and second baseman of twenty years ago, was the first Italian to win fame on the American diamond. Gus Mancuso was catcher for the Giants, Lou Chiozza third baseman for the Giants, and Adolph Camilli first baseman with the Philadelphia Nationals.

about finished, but WOV is just down the way on 43rd Street. It's the big Italian-American station—in fact, the only station in the United States that broadcasts all its programmes in one foreign language. You ought to go down to see it. Let's 'phone Nardella." He 'phoned Nardella, and I went there next morning at 11.30. It's in the WOV Building at 142 West 43rd Street, and is a modern, completely up-to-date "Radio City" in miniature. Mr John Iraci, who built it and owns it, has retired from importing, and gives all his time to the advancement of broadcasting in the Italian field. He has made this one of the outstanding independent stations in the United States, and Ralph Nardella, its manager, is a cultivated young gentleman without a trace of accent, whom you'd never imagine to be of recent foreign-language origin. He took me through sound-proof doors into the studio where a small symphonic orchestra was broadcasting. An Italian comedian, who was coming on after the music, went over and kidded the *maestro* in pantomime. There was a grand finale, somebody said something, and somebody else whispered, "Shut-up! Shut-up!" An Italian Jimmy Wallington told listeners about the biggest spaghetti factory in the world over on Long Island, and they were putting on a serial play, *San Giovanni Decollato*, a stage classic with a lot of horseplay in it. At one point in the act people were in a house which caught fire, and the director hissed, "*Grido! Grido!*" (which means "Shout! Shout!"), and then, when the actors stared at him, he whispered, "*Grido in Inglese!*" Then they shouted, "Fire! Fire!" and a gentleman

who was a dog, with horn-rimmed glasses and a Derby hat, came and barked into the microphone. He was a grandfather in other parts of the drama. When this old Neapolitan actor had stopped being a dog and a grandfather they announced station WOV, with a few bars of its theme song, *The March of the Bersaglieri*. They broadcast symphonic and operatic stuff, the cream of the Italian artists in America. They have as their news commentator "Alfredo," the best-known newspaper columnist in the Italian colony. His Excellency Piero Parini, Italian Minister Plenipotentiary of Education, broadcast over it when he came to New York, and Mayor La Guardia has broadcast over it in both English and Italian. It is big-league stuff, with programmes sponsored by national advertisers, and has hook-ups with other stations. Chicago, St Louis, and San Francisco as well as New York have stations which broadcast in various foreign languages, but WOV is the only all-Italian set-up.

I've purposely left to the last, because they cover the whole map, the two greatest blessings—and one curse—which Italian Americans have contributed to the colour and texture of American life. The two blessings are market-gardening on small acreage and wine. The curse is organized crime and gang warfare. All three of these contributions (including some interesting vegetables which Anglo-Saxon Americans never ate before), wine when it is red, and gun-spilled blood, which is redder, add to the colour of all the Mulberry Streets, Grand Streets, and Bleecker Streets, and "Little Italies" of most big American cities.



In partial return for the old gifts to them of "cochineal, quinine, and syphilis" the Italians have given Americans broccoli, zucchini, endive, chicory, and finocchio—which looks like pale green celery, tastes like paregoric, and is a delicious vegetable—spaghetti, macaroni, spumoni—and Al Capone. Market-gardening on small acreages, they've made beautiful garden areas in California, Florida, the Great Lakes regions, New England, New Jersey, the Hudson Valley west bank, Delaware, and down the North Atlantic seacoast. Connecticut is a prize spot, and a typical district is the town and countryside of Montovese, a few miles north of New Haven. It has its Barboni Tavern, its Fiori Street and Palmieri Avenue, as well as its Smith Avenue and Jones Street. The architecture is American, and, of course, the town is only partly Italian, but if you stop awhile it will begin to look less American to you, because the otherwise typical American frame houses frequently have outdoor staircases, outdoor kitchens, rock gardens, and cobblestone fountains, such as only Anglo-Saxon millionaires have, and you see a lot of beehives, a few goats, beautiful grape arbours, other old-world touches, bird-baths, bird-houses, terraces. In every market-gardening region in America you find Italian groups like these, but their biggest agricultural contribution, of course, has been wine grapes, vineyards in which they are the leaders, though I never dreamed how vast and important this contribution was until I went out West, visiting—and travelling through—the marvellous Italian wine valleys and wine mountain slopes of California. I say "travel-

ling through " because the total area is actually bigger than that of some minor European nations.

I had the good luck, soon after reaching Los Angeles, to meet one of the grey-haired, robust "Founding Fathers" of this vine-bedecked "New Italy" in a new world, Antonio Moramarco, king of the "Old Mission" holdings, who would look like a twin of the late King Umberto if he had military moustaches. He is as proud of the peasant stock he sprang from as of the fact that he is now a wine king. As a young immigrant, with the elders of his own peasant family, he began modestly laying back in 1881 the foundations of the combine which now controls thousands of acres and produces millions of gallons of wine annually. He is a Spartan bachelor who doesn't go in for luxuries or frivolities. His office is crude, simple, carpetless as it was forty years ago, and he makes his rich, elegant young nephews and nieces work in the wineries so they will know what they are inheriting when he dies. He knows everything about wine and brandies, and devotes all his own talents to the art of it, leaving executive business details to an Austrian American named Julian Pollock, who knows all about business and something less about wine.

As I was tasting the so-called ports, sherries, Tokays, Angelicas, the so-called clarets, Zinfandels, burgundies, sauternes, I made a comment about the "sherry" which would have been equally apropos of them all. I said, "Look, this is a good wine, fine body, fine flavour—but it doesn't taste *anything* like sherry."

Pollock said, "I won't dispute it with you. I don't know anything about it." He was so honest, and so one-sided a business executive that I couldn't help laughing.

Serious conversation with some of the experts found most of them in accord that it was a pity these often excellent California wines couldn't have new native American names instead of being called by European names. But the consuming public, they say, will not permit it. The public must have wines named by the old traditional names they know.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The beginning of the Moramarco set-up in 1881 was contemporaneous, I learned, with the genesis of most of the other big Italian wine developments in California. They nearly all began in the early eighties. It was exactly in 1881 that an enterprising group of Italians and a few Swiss collected a fund of 10,000 dollars and bought land in the Sonoma Valley near the coast, about a hundred miles from San Francisco. They named the settlement Asti. It is now a vast corporation headed by the Rossi brothers with a winery whose capacity is four million gallons. Most of the Swiss have dropped out. The Rossis produce dry wine in Asti, and in 1900 established another colony farther south in Madeira, which produces sweet wines—port, Angelica, Madeira. This is only one more combine, but typical. In 1918 U. S. wine-consumption was fifty-one million gallons, but during prohibition it trebled, held strong after prohibition, and by 1930 the annual consumption of wine was nearly two hundred million gallons a year, mostly California wine, mostly Italian-made. The Guastis in San Bernardino County have the world's largest vineyard. The Beaulieu vineyard in Napa County, the Cucamonga in San Bernardino, the Mission in Los Angeles, are the next largest, but there are some 240 large wineries in the State. Experts are agreed, and have said in books and journals repeatedly, that California wines are generally a frank imitation of European wines, and that they go in generally for bulk production rather than for quality, which doesn't mean, of course, that it isn't good, honest wine of its sort. The experts are also on formal record as saying that the best wines are produced in the East, notably in the Finger Lakes and Hudson Valley districts. "California furnishes the quantity and New York furnishes the quality," they say.

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The thing which most surprised me while visiting the California wineries is that practically all their vats, the gigantic "barrels," which are sometimes tall as a house and hold 50,000 or 60,000 gallons, are made of redwood instead of the traditional oak.

Next to California wines and Capone in Alcatraz, the most outstanding Italian phenomenon on the Pacific Coast is the Honourable Angelo Rossi, Mayor of San Francisco, suave, white-haired, ruddy-cheeked, a florist by profession until he went into politics, and who still always wears a white carnation in his button-hole. He was easy to see, in his fine, modern office in the new City Hall, and was a gracious, unhurried host, who pinned a white carnation in my lapel also when I took leave of him—in startling contrast with the hectic tempest which always blows round Milord Fiorello in New York's City Hall.

Mayor Rossi and Mayor La Guardia, who know and admire each other, have, however, this one strong bond: they consider themselves to be, and are, 100 per cent. Americans now, rather than Italian Americans, and both have the same wide sympathy and understanding towards the underdog, the poor, the labouring classes, without being radical or antagonistic towards big business. Mayor Rossi was one of six children, born in California (Amador County) to Angelo Rossi, miner and then keeper of a general store, and his wife, Madalena Gueirilo, a Genoese maiden who had come independently to America and found romance and a husband here. So Mr Rossi is 100 per cent. Italian by heredity, and 100 per cent. American by birth. His

outstanding characteristic, I think, after an hour's talk with him, is his pride in the cosmopolitan city which he has helped rebuild, and his deep conviction that America is and should be a cosmopolis of all races, in which a good American is a good American first of all, independently of what nation or race-group he originally sprang from. The West is like that.

When I got back East again Gino Bigongiari took me to see a typical famous winery in the Hudson Valley. We drove up the west bank to the Highland region, turned off the concrete road, and came out on a plateau with the river beneath us—and I forgot that I was in America. Two brothers and a sister, Aldo, Alfredo, and Ada Bolognesi, have built their own private, Italian "hill town" in the midst of their vineyards, with stone towers, a villa, a warehouse like a cathedral, grouped round a paved square such as Italian small towns have; vast wineries, built all of stone, with Roman arches. Out of the door of the villa, with the brothers and sister, came Dino Bigongiari, the Columbia professor, grinning at our surprise to find him there, and when they took me into the "caves" with barrel-vats twenty feet tall, oak-ribbed like tug-boats, with ladders standing against them, we espied asleep on top of the largest an English-origin Harvard Professor of Philosophy, Dino's friend, who had climbed up and put a rubber hose down through the bung-hole. He was sleeping the sleep of Bacchus, though he had no vine leaves in his hair.

The father and founder, Alessandro Bolognesi, now

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dead, had come from Bologna, and had given his children names which all began with "A" like his own, so Aldo told me—Aldo, Alfredo, Ada, Arrigo, Alfonso. He had pretended it was so that all family silver and linen could be initialled with the same "A" and divided among them after his death. but they suspect there was some additional harmless vanity or superstition in it.

Alessandro had been a private banker at 27 Wall Street prior to the World War, owned a 100,000-dollar mansion on Prospect Park, Brooklyn, and had bought the Highland property originally as a summer toy for his daughter, Ada. With the depression they withdrew from banking and developed it. They grow Delawares for dry white wine, Iona for champagne, the Bacchus and Delaware for dry red wines.<sup>1</sup>

The Bolognesi place has become romantically patriarchal in two short generations. It is an Italian "village," an Italian settlement, where the wine is made by the original settlers the family brought there, and by their progeny, now grown young men and women, who were born on the land and brought up in the tradition.

After the Harvard professor had awakened from his Bacchic slumber they gave us a dinner which began as Italian and ended with a big roast turkey, accompanied by red, white, and sparkling wines. The Harvard

<sup>1</sup> There are thirty or forty Italian vineyards in the Hudson Valley, while some of the biggest and best are in this same state's Finger Lakes region. The Bacchus is a small black grape, not very good to eat. The Catawba is an American grape, good for eating, and makes a good sweet wine. The Iona is delicious eating, but so expensive that it is almost always used for fine wine. The Concord, good to eat and for jellies, makes only mediocre "red ink."

professor got going again, sang about Yale—you know what—and said the desert wine was “sweeter than the voices of nightingales in the forests of England.” Gino arose and drank a toast to our hostess.

When the *baba au rhum* was brought in by the proud, beaming cook Dino asked what region she had come from. Signora Ada said that she was from Aidussina, near Trieste, and Dino, who had been an artilleryman in the War, shouted, “*Dio mio!* How often did I shell your village, and how glad I am that I didn’t hit you.”

Italian Americans are generally credited in the United States with putting business efficiency into crime, introducing competition, trusts, monopolies, high-powered organization. They’ve had spectacular publicity about it, and Al Capone, its ultimate Tsar, is one of the most famous figures in the world. He has become the archetype and symbol. Magazine articles and books have been written about him in many languages, while a hundred lesser Capones are being forgotten.

But I found in Chicago, despite the fact that its outstanding Italian-American citizens to-day are respected and honourable contractors, bankers, merchants, lawyers, judges, that the Windy City still remembers big Jim Colosimo, who slumped to the floor of his *café* with a bullet in his brain one early March morning in 1920, and some of the five hundred men, mostly Italian, who followed him to the grave in gangster slayings. Colosimo’s name and *café* are locally remembered, because “Colosimo’s” to-day is a big, night-clubby

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restaurant with a dazzling floor show. But the world forgets the Colosimos to focus its memory on Al Capone, who emerged supreme in 1927 as Chicago's bootleg boss. He began humbly as a bouncer for Johnnie Torrio, who was organizing the liquor racket, and then began organizing on his own. He presently took Cicero, a big, flourishing suburb of Chicago, as Grant took Richmond. He installed his own mayor and chief of police, and in Greater Chicago his machine-gunners roved the streets assassinating upstart bootleg rivals, as well as saloon-keepers who refused to buy his beer. He became the *seigneur* of a magnificent estate on Palm Island, Miami Beach, Florida, and a jolly, well-liked host at swimming parties in his marble bathing-pool, sometimes attended by tycoons and beauties of the top-notch social world. He appeared at Chicago first nights and fashionable theatres escorted by eighteen tuxedoed gorillas, a bodyguard outnumbering that of the President of the United States, thumbed his nose at four successive chiefs of police, rebuked judges over the telephone, revolutionized crime and corruption by putting them both on an efficiency basis, instilling order and obedience. He had served with the A.E.F. overseas, and did the instilling with machine-guns. The only way the Government could get him was by a charge of income-tax evasion. He's out in Alcatraz prison, in San Francisco Bay, to be released in 1942. He is forty years old.

Capone, of course, is simply the apotheosis. Italians were numerous in nearly every organized crime group throughout the land—and still are. However, this



curious fact emerges from statistics: *the number of arrests and convictions for crime among Italian Americans is no larger per capita than that of any other foreign-language race group, and no larger than that of the so-called native white stock of English-speaking origin.* These figures are true as far as anybody can find out, and seem to be confirmed by the fact that the several hundred outstanding individual criminals, either rubbed out or put behind the bars by J. Edgar Hoover and his G-men, contain no dominating proportion of Italians.

So what?

My law-aiding Italian friends, including some in the police, offer two solutions of the paradox.

The cynical solution is that the Italians are smarter, better organized, and get caught less. The second suggested solution is that the Italian proportion is really not dominant, but that it gets twenty times more sensational publicity than any other crime group because Italians are theatrical, sensational, dramatic, filled with fierce loyalties, bandit codes, vendettas—all the stuff out of the Sicilian Camorra and *Cavalleria Rusticana*. There seems to be a good deal of truth in this, not forgetting the non-Italian Monk Eastman, Leopold and Loeb, Hauptmann, Dillinger, the Ku-Klux and the Black Legion. Italian gang-land has furnished gorgeous, sensational “copy.”

I offer, finally, a third fantastic explanation of my own. I suspect that the pure Italian, contrary to romantic notions about him, is above all a business-man, a builder, a go-getter, interested more in construction,

material welfare, and money than in anything else. Christopher Columbus sailed from Palos on August 3, 1492, for 10 per cent. of the gross profit, and refused to sail unless the deal was made. It was a business enterprise, a commercial exploitation. Both Leonardo and Michelangelo were "commercial artists" who drove the hardest bargains they could with popes and princes, despite the immortal glory of the frescoes and sculpture which they might certainly have created anyway. Furthermore, the classic Romans were the business empire-builders, the road-builders, the go-getters, the Arrow-collar boys of antiquity. They built Rome and all roads leading to it for profit, just as coming to America they built Grand Central, the roads, and the biggest apartment buildings in New York. I think they introduced business, go-getting, efficiency, into crime, because their middle name is "business," and that Al Capone became Al Capone for the same psychological reason that Julius Cæsar became Julius Cæsar.

The final interesting thing about America's Italian citizens is that, whether they are actually leaders in crime or merely get the most publicity, they have fewer arrests for drunkenness and fewer deaths from alcoholism than other foreign-language race groups, a lower percentage of insanity, and the lowest percentage of paupers enumerated and admitted to almshouses in the Land of the Free, which was discovered by one "wop" and named after another.

## IV. *German Americans*

THE FIRST GERMAN AMERICAN I MET WAS IN THE PENNSYLVANIA-DUTCH belt—a man named David Buehler, at Gettysburg. An original Böhler had migrated to the William Penn colony with Count Zinzendorf around 1740, had become a bishop, and helped found the Moravian Seminary at Bethlehem. This descendant, who spelled his name “Buehler,” seemed immensely tall, and had large eyes, deep-set, with a grizzling beard which made him look like God.

I was sitting on his lawn under an old, battle-stained American flag. He stood towering over me, tossed me a five-dollar gold piece, yellow like the dandelions, patted my head, and said, “Happy Independence Day,” in a voice which rolled like July thunder.

I was three and a half years old at the time, and this German American was my maternal grandfather. I remember him only on that 4th of July—he died soon afterwards of Bright’s disease—and German tradition had died out of my family (which was English, anyway, on the paternal side) long before I was born.

I am significant in this context, along with Grandpa Buehler, only because there are close to twenty million others like me in the U.S.A. Our German blood has been so completely amalgamated in the Melting Pot that nobody thinks of us any more as German Ameri-

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cans. But we are a fact which perhaps should be briefly sketched in as a sort of back-drop curtain for these current adventures and observations among the five million more recent German Americans who are still in process of melting—still seething here and there, occasionally emitting steam.

It is a back-drop curtain dotted with hot dogs, Hamburgers, Christmas-trees, pianos, pickles, waffles, teddy bears, Noah's Arks, the Republican Elephant, kindergartens and models for universities, Brooklyn Bridge, the linotype machine, symphony societies, the *New York Times*, Funk and Wagnalls' *Standard Dictionary*, and all American political cartooning, whose father was Nast from Germany.

Characters alive and dead on this prologue stage, which will be cleared in a minute to make way for some German Americans who are still acutely conscious of their foreign-language origin, include Molly Pitcher, who was born Maria Ludwig, General Custer, Barbara Frietchie, Lowell Thomas, Clark Gable, Babe Ruth, General John J. Pershing, whose family spelled their name "Pfoerschin" as late as 1860, Herbert Hoover, the Four Marx Brothers, Ringling Brothers, Rabbi Wise, and certainly my sainted aunt from Hawkinsville, Georgia, who, despite her saintliness, hated all "foreigners." It includes likewise all the Rockefellers, Wanamakers, Woolworths, Schwabs, Fricks, Drexels, Waldorfs, Astors—all the Havemeyers, Spreckelses, Brills, Kuhns, Kahns, Loeb's, Warburgs, Lewisohns, and Guggenheims—American names now, internationally famous. Just as in the case of Hamburgers, hot

dogs, and the tune of *Maryland, My Maryland*, neither they nor anybody else gives a hoot or a thought any more to the fact that they were all once German—but there they are, and *auf Wiedersehen* to them.

Late in the summer of 1937 I was out in St Charles County on the banks of the Missouri river in a countryside so thickly, consciously, foreignly German that I might have been in the valley of the Rhine or in Bavaria.

It was just off a concrete highway and not thirty miles from St Louis. I walked into a general store—a country store—and for a moment passed unnoticed while a group of American farm children, some of them tiny tots barely toddling, were buzzing to each other and to the storekeeper in Low German, not one word of English—not even interspersed with English slang. When their eyes focused on me as a stranger they became shy, a little frightened, and a little resentful. The storekeeper stared at me with a definite lack of friendliness, despite the fact that I was accompanied by an amiable German friend, native to that locality. In that community I was the foreigner, and my presence was regarded, as I soon discovered, with a slight resentment and a slight suspicion, even though I went there sponsored by some of their own people.

It was a magnificent countryside, and presently the grown son of a local German Lutheran pastor was taking me to visit some of his father's leading communicants. On the top of a high hill, overlooking hundreds of rich acres, we drove to a big red-brick farmhouse

where an old woman and a younger one with black shawls wound round their heads like European peasants were raking last year's leaves. They were the wife and daughter of the family. They said in German that the master was in the lot behind the barn—and went on raking leaves. We went to the barn, and the master stood behind the fence beside a pigsty and looked at us. The pastor's son, thinking himself unrecognized, explained who he was. The man said, "*Ja*, I know." The pastor's son then introduced me, explaining that I was a friend who was going to write about the Germans in America. The man did not speak or move a muscle. He stood there, heavy in the bright sunshine, with bright blue eyes too closely set together in his heavy face, and stared so hard at me that I was compelled to stare back, and was unable to smile. There was a tenseness and hostility that left me dumb and bewildered. I finally tried to explain my simple and friendly purpose. I said that his pastor would be much obliged if he would let us see his farm and invite us in to talk a little. He said simply, "I vill not." And then, as the pastor's son, blushing and embarrassed, said, "But, Mr Sandfort . . ." the man said, "I haf no time for such." He did not move away. He stood planted there, staring. It was we who turned and walked back to our car and drove away, while he still stood there motionless in the sunlight.

The pastor's son said, "I am sorry; they do not like strangers."

I said, "But haven't you and your father some intimate friends in the congregation where I should be

welcome because you brought me?" He was terribly embarrassed. He said, "My father will be sorry. They are all friends. But they do not like strangers."

"Shall we call it a day?" I asked. He said, "Oh, no, I am sure we shall find some who understand, but you had better let me go in first and see."

I felt very queer, and rode along with him. I kept wondering, and do not yet know, whether Mr Sandfort was simply one of those hard-bitten, rich peasants, German by chance, but who might have been of any nationality, such as Zola, for instance, wrote about in Normandy, or whether I was being punished as an American for the psychological cruelty to which my countrymen had subjected all obviously German people during the World War. I still do not know, but I suspect there is something of this in it, revived like rubbing an old wound, because Germany has again to-day a form of government which is being bitterly criticized in the world's forum.

I suspect this because I am unwilling to believe that the German element in the United States, including those who still speak with an accent, is basically a less friendly, less kindly element than other groups. Yet several times that day on big farms in St Charles County the pastor's son came sheepishly back to the car without inviting me to descend from it—and nothing remotely like this had happened to me among Scandinavians and Italians, nor did anything like it happen later among Poles or Russians. Among Germans it happened a number of times, both in the rural Middle West and urban East. I shall not emphasize it further.

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I had a guilty if impersonal feeling that I had it coming to me as a retaliation for the way Americans had treated them twenty years ago.

Of course, however, the German-American farmers of Missouri comprise all sorts of people, hot, cold, cordial, hostile, keen, dull, as any hundred thousand people do anywhere on earth, and presently we were being entertained and helped by pleasant, kindly ones. Down through a beautiful, high-waving, green hundred acres of winter wheat we came to a house on the banks of the wide Missouri with an old-world peasant courtyard in which were dogs, cats, chickens, rabbits, an enormous iron pot with a fire under it, and its owner, Louis Poesse, wiping his hands on his overalls prior to handshakes.

"Two years ago it vass all unter vater," said he, pointing to a mark on the barn, "but yust look at it now."

He was a small, wiry Rhinelander, past fifty, who had struggled hard and was now happy and beginning to be prosperous. He loved it in Missouri, had built his own house, which he showed us from top to bottom with pride, including the family album. Nobody was at home with him that day except the hired man and his own sweet, faded little wife. His brother had gone to Oregon; his son was a chemist in New Jersey, married to an American girl; one of his daughters was in an American business college, and would go from there out into the wide world; the other daughter, blonde, buxom, pretty, was staying there to help her mother, would marry a nice German boy, and their babies would inherit the farm.



We sat in the spotless kitchen a long while, drank coffee, ate German sausages made on the place, and talked a great deal. The depression hadn't hurt them much. They had their own meat, milk, vegetables, grain, and didn't need much money. Their hard times had been in getting started. Louis Poesé loved the land, the climate, his wheat-fields, and the wide, muddy river, but what he loved most in America was freedom.

"Ve are free here," he kept repeating, with a deep, simple joy. "Ve can do vat we please, and be independent."

He was not exactly politically-minded, but knew and deplored the fact that dictators were coming into fashion in other countries.

"If anybody vants a dictator here," said he, "ve vill not haf to murder each other about it."

"Uh?" said I. "Vat vill ve haf to do then?"

"Wote stronger!" he replied blandly, and I went away feeling that I had met a man who, though not particularly intelligent or well educated, had a clear conception of the nature of democracy, and who, standing there on his fertile hundred acres, came pretty near being the ideal American citizen, despite his strong foreign accent. Having talked since with hundreds of prosperous German-American farmers in the thickest districts of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Ohio, I am optimistic enough to believe that Louis Poesé can be multiplied by a couple of million and called the typical German-American farmer of the Middle West. He may sometimes be hard, mean, and pig-eyed like the man on the hill, sometimes warm and lovable like Poesé, but

nearly always I think he will be a good, loyal American who wants to keep the land of freedom intact by "working stronger," rather than by shooting his neighbours or importing new isms from old Europe.

Up through the hills of St Charles County we rode through prosperous farms, nine-tenths of which were German, to visit Emil Finck, a big dairyman. He was outspoken, intelligent, candid concerning both the virtues and faults of the German farmer in rural America. He believes they are the best farmers in the long run because they are slow, plodding, patient, respect the soil, take care of it and conserve it.

"The Yankees," he said, "would come out West, wear out the land, and move on. We work more solidly and more slowly. We put in more manure, more fertilizer, wear old clothes, buy phosphate, and think of ten years, fifty, a hundred. See that slope over there?"

He pointed to hills a mile away. They looked green and all right to me.

"It has been pulled down for fifty years," he said, "it is skimmed milk. I sent a handful of it to Cornell to be analysed, and it came back 'phosphate zero.' My Yankee friend and neighbour, a nice fellow, who wears better clothes and has a bigger car than mine, heard I needed more space for my cattle, and tried to rent it to me. I told him I'd rent it for ten years but not for two. George, my hired man, and I were over there sitting and eating lunch the other day, among those poor hills, and had them in our fingers. It would take ten years to make that land as good as mine."

Finck now took another tack about his fellow-

Germans. As farmers he was sure they were the best; as human beings he felt they were backward and bull-headed, made the mistake of hanging on too long to German customs, German language, German churches with sermons in German—too heavy and slow in becoming Americans.

“To hold on to German as a household language is bad,” he said. “It keeps us and our children foreigners around here. We are thick-headed and proud about it when we ought to be ashamed. When I go to St Charles with a truck-load of eggs I always sell several crates to an old fossil friend of mine named Schultz. But he makes me speak German to him! He wouldn’t buy from a man who tried to sell him anything in English! I don’t mind, but he makes his thirty-four-year-old son speak German always in the home, and gets mad at him when he speaks English. He visited Germany last year, and now struts around in America with a Tyrolean feather in his hat. I laugh at him and like him, but how can he ever expect his children to become good Americans?”

Mrs Finck came into the parlour to join us. Born in Germany, she spoke English now without a trace of accent. There were four young children in the household who had games, picture-books, and a pictorial encyclopedia, all in English.

“They never speak German,” she said, “and we don’t want them to. They are going to be Americans, even though we do live in St Charles County!”

That same day we visited them the Fincks were preparing to tear out their old kitchen range and install a

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modern American electric cooking-stove, and I said, "Look, you are in transition. In my own country back East, in New York State, in the Hudson Valley, we are thick, too, with German farmers, yet they have become so completely American that neither they nor anybody thinks of them any more as German. They are mostly Palatines who came here from the Rhenish provinces long before the American Revolution. They have been here, my friend, for over two hundred years. They are as American as the English who followed the *Mayflower*. Most of you came out to the Middle West, here, between 1870 and 1890, within the memory of plenty of people still living. A few of you came as frontier pioneers in 1820, and a lot of you came after 1848 along with Carl Schurz, but the inundation, the great wave, came after 1871. Give yourselves another hundred years and you'll all be pure American, even here in St Charles County."

"Well, some of them are so damn' slow," he said, without a trace of accent, "that I guess it'll take a hundred years. Not so very long back I was over in Belleville—it was after one of the ex-Kaiser's relatives had died—they had big signs all over the place draped with *crêpe*: 'Unser Fritz ist tot.'"

"Do they care anything about Hitler, the Nazis?" I asked.

"Absolutely not," he said; "their romantic clings are to the dream of an old Deutschland which no longer exists, if it ever did."

"Would you like to see the German language disappear in America?" I asked.

"As a household language, yes, and the German-language Press along with it. I would like the German to survive only as a cultural language for people who want to read Goethe, Schiller, Heine, and modern science or psychology, but it gives me a pain in the neck when I have to talk German to sell a crate of American eggs to an American grocer in the United States of America!"

Back in St Louis, greatest German-American metropolis, I spent several days whirligigged around by various kind friends, among German-American celebrities, individual groups and institutions. The Germanic element is strong, prosperous, loyal to the land of its adoption, predominant, and very popular here. With its mayor, Bernard F. Dickman; its comptroller, Louis F. Nolte; its first citizen, tall, stately, beautiful, octogenarian Charles Nagel, former Cabinet Minister under President Taft, long-time Republican National Committee-man, and Vice-President of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, now America's best beloved, most outstanding German-American citizen in public life—the mass population of St Louis is proud of its Germanic origin, and has a right to be. I rode on streets and avenues named Goethe, Cologne, Milentz, Schollmeyer, Eichelberger, past advertising billboards with top lines written in German, and under them a blond-moustached Bavarian papa with a fat tummy, who beams and exclaims, "*Ja!* it hass der old-time zipp and shparkle." I can't imagine coming on a lot of billboards in Brooklyn covered with black-moustached

Sicilians who exclaim, "Santa Lucia! how I lika dis spaghetti!"

Down into Southern St Louis, almost solidly German, my friends took me to lunch at German House, a civic monument designed by architect Jacob Heim in the style of Old Heidelberg Castle and finished around 1930 to become a centre of Germanic social life and culture, and to house the meetings of seventy-six German-American societies. Neither on the way there, through thickly populated German districts with many German signs, nor in its halls, rich with pictures, did I see one single portrait, bust, or lithograph of Adolf Hitler, nor one swastika. Apparently Hitlerite ballyhoo in America is confined to Fritz Lieber Kuhn, his Long Island "Storm Troops," his *Bund*, and sundry militant Nazis. I record this not to prove anything, but because it turned out later to be the same in Milwaukee, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, and was in notable contrast with Italian sections, which have photographs engravings, lithographs, plaster statuettes, bronze busts of Mussolini, spread from hell to breakfast, as Garibaldi used to be, side by side, joyfully, with more lithographs of President Roosevelt, Italian and American flags proudly and happily entwined. Make what you will of it; it may be merely that our Italian-American populace is more flamboyant and theatrical.

We went down in the *Ratskeller* and had lunch with George Seibel, who is President of the German House Corporation. He had been a butcher, born in Munich, had lived in West Africa, Marseilles, South America, Norway, had served in the German Navy, came to visit

his sick sister in St Louis after the War, stayed there to manufacture sausages, and thinks America is the best. He had red hair, eyeglasses, and tiny moustaches. Presently there joined us John Gewinner, Treasurer of German House, wholesale grocer, chairman of a lot of state organizations and some national ones, beaming and friendly, with a high, old-fashioned pompadour, Bavarian, from Bayreuth. He and Seibel had fun translating for me the inscriptions round the wall: "Time is Short: Don't Worry, Be Gay"; "Eat, Drink, and be Merry, for To-morrow We Die"; "The Man who Loves not Wine, Women, and Song Remains a Fool his Whole Life Long."

Several groups of *hausfraus* of South St Louis, remnants of the once universal *kaffee-klatsch* neighbourhood clubs, had lunched, and were now over at the card-tables playing euchre in German, and being gay in a subdued way. No gentlemen in the *Ratskeller* were being gay at all. Indeed, they were being rather heavy. Mr Seibel explained that they were gay in the evenings.

From this democratic replica of Old Heidelberg we drove to a city within a city, the Anheuser-Busch breweries, a vast, not ugly conglomeration of brick buildings, an industrial principality, and were presently ushered through high-tapestried halls, glowing with objects of art, to meet Adolphus Busch III, hereditary king of a business realm that paid eight million dollars in ordinary taxes in one poor year. Adolphus III, tall, in his early forties, with thick, smooth, jet-black hair, silky, smooth, jet-black moustache, dark eyes, and a handsome face, glowing with warm blood through its

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smooth olive tan, tailored in dark blue imported Cheviot, with a deep, velvet-red chrysanthemum glowing in his coat lapel, was royalty in modern dress stepped out of a medieval stained-glass window. Beside him was his Prime Minister, "Colonel" George A. H. Mills, whose title on the board of officers is Secretary.

If there was a stained-glass window aura about Adolphus III, "Colonel" Mills was candidly amused by my visit, for I had explained that I didn't want anything whatsoever—except to look at Adolphus III. Since I didn't want anything they both opened up and told me priceless anecdotes about the founding of the dynasty. Adolphus Busch, the founder, had come to St Louis three generations ago, in 1875, and opened his small brewers' supplies office in a sort of old warehouse. He had put a handsome carpet and a big brass cuspidor on the floor—unheard of in those days, and consequently revolutionary. Office floors were bare in 1875 in Missouri, and customers spat tobacco juice all over them. So that when Adolphus wanted to borrow some money from the bank the cuspidor and carpet worried the bankers, who refused to lend him a penny. Presently he met and fell in love with a Fräulein Anheuser. Maybe she too wondered a little about her bridegroom's practicality, because on the night of her wedding he was driven towards the Anheuser house in a horse and buggy and exclaimed, "Why is it all lighted up?"

"You're being married," the driver told him.

"Good God! I forgot," he said.

He had rented or bought a house of his own for the bride in another part of the city, had hired and installed



a housekeeper, but had forgotten the key, and they couldn't awaken the housekeeper, and spent their wedding night sitting on the stoop until the milkman came.

He had been a great man and a great eccentric. They didn't mind talking about both sides of his character. In the reception-room hung a replica of the famous portrait by Zorn, whose original is now in the St Louis Museum, with the Anheuser-Busch trademark gleaming on the watch-fob. Zorn had refused to put it there, but Adolphus had made him paint it in.

Three generations have passed, and the Busch family to-day are an authentic part of America's aristocracy. Good blood to begin with, they have had wealth and culture for three generations, which most sociologists agree is the laboratory formula that makes an aristocrat. If the Busch family tends to be feudal it has accepted the obligations along with the privileges—endowments to Washington, Harvard, and other universities, gifts to museums and institutions of public welfare, Christmas-trees (as well as old-age pensions, compensations, etc.) that look as tall as the Empire State Building for their workmen. Of the staunch Americanism of this German-American brewery, the largest in the entire world, and of its important prototypes, Pabst, Schlitz, Ruppert, Ehret, Kohler, Lauer, the American brewing merged interests, and the U.S. Brewers Association, there has never been any doubt, even during the World War. More than three-fourths of the directors, officers, and owners in these industries bear German names, and most of the founders were born in the Old Country, but nine-tenths of the present heads were born Americans,

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and it is characteristic that when America went to war with Germany, the Anheuser-Busch plant, past which the Mississippi rolls, built submarines equipped with Diesel engines—for the American Navy.

The next most outstanding German-American city within a city which I visited in the St Louis area was Concordia Seminary, German Lutheran, Missouri Synod, rich, cloistered buildings of stone, but with steel radio towers among the tallest in the Middle West—station KFUE, high-powered.<sup>1</sup> On the entrance is written "Gospel Voice" in old-fashioned Gothic letters, but they broadcast the voice with modern high voltage, and when I entered their sound-room, just as they were preparing for a sacred broadcast, a blond soprano, thumbing Johann Sebastian Bach, said, "In a minute I'm going to show up the guy who sang this yesterday."

I am inclined to think that Lutheran churches and

<sup>1</sup> While fundamentalist, Concordia Seminary has a faculty of brilliant men drawn from the great lay universities of the world, and is the intellectual centre of German Lutheranism in America. It was founded in 1839 by Lutherans from Saxony, and the first school was a log-cabin. To-day, with a three-million-dollar plant and an enrolment of 561 theological students, it is the largest denominational divinity school in the United States. The Lutheran Church in America is predominantly German, but not entirely so. The largest affiliated body is the Synodical Conference, of which Dr L. F. Fuerbringer is President. This is the group with which the Missouri Synod is affiliated. Another large group is the United Lutheran Church, with headquarters in New York. The Augustana Synod is largely Scandinavian. While German Americans are mostly Lutheran, the Roman Catholic group is also strong. While German and Austrian Catholics are mostly Roman Catholic, the Greek Orthodox Church is strong among the Hungarians. All these Church groups, both Protestant and Catholic, are in clear-cut opposition to Communism, Fascism, and Nazism. While adhering to separation of Church and State, they none the less are pillars of democracy, as opposed to all new isms.

breweries are the two outstanding institutional contributions of the Germans to the American Melting Pot mass life. If some good pastor objects to my combining them in that way I suggest that worship of God and temperance are both respectable contributions.

In St Louis' tallest skyscraper, which isn't as tall as the one built in New York by a Missouri German named Walter Chrysler, I was taken to call on Judge J. Hugo Grimm, who sat for many years on the State Supreme Court bench, and is prominent in the Steuben and Missouri Historical Societies. He feels that the greatest contributions of the Germans to America are the plain, homely virtues of their race: industry, perseverance, patience, thrift, respect for authority, plus a genuine loyalty to the land of their adoption. The next important thing, he feels, is love of good music and its dissemination, Bach festivals, singing societies, chamber music, and symphonies. The Kneisels in chamber music, the Damrosches, Stocks, Goldbecks, Theodore Thomas, van der Stucken, Bergman, Anton Seidl, and their predecessors were the great pioneers in a field whose leaders throughout America to-day are no longer predominantly German.

Judge Grimm's office was full of elephants, ranging in size from mosquitoes to fox-terriers, jade, ivory, crystal, bronze, glass, agate, with one surrealist elephant made of wire, and one with a clock in its fat belly.

Judge Grimm told me to go to see Otto Pfeiffer, editor of the *Westliche Post*, the oldest daily newspaper in St Louis, so I went to see Mr Pfeiffer, who was in his shirt-sleeves, refreshing himself with a glass of beer

while up to his neck in work. In this office the late Joseph Pulitzer had begun his career as a cub reporter. Mr Pfeiffer's paper, like a majority of the German-language dailies, is independent, American, active in American politics, and more concerned with the interests of Americans of German extraction in America to-day than in what goes on in the Old Country. He told me that he had editorially condemned the Nazi fight against the Church, and had expressed the editorial opinion that the Nazis were making a mistake in the way they were treating the Jews, but had written about it as something happening in a foreign country.

It has seemed to me all over the United States that most German Americans have this attitude towards Hitlerism, whether they approve or disapprove it. One very high-up German American, who asked me to quote him anonymously, said, "It is in one way a delicate question. The Reich is a sovereign state. If it decides *within that state* to boycott, starve, exile, or shoot all its astronomers, or all its young women who have bobbed hair and cannot play the piano, other sovereign states and citizens of other sovereign states may deplore it, even condemn it; other astronomers and unmusical bobbed-hair young ladies all over the world may resent it as an outrage; but as citizens of another country neither we nor our Government have any right to interfere with it."

That evening, with some German friends, I began making a round of *Ratskellers*, restaurants, *Bierstubes*. German Jews, I noticed, seemed as welcome in all of them as any other customer. Oil paintings were

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generally of Bismarck, the ex-Kaiser, Hindenburg, Carl Schurz, Baron Steuben.

Big Bevo, with Little Bevo diagonally across the street, and an elaborate Tyrolean *Bierstube* called the Black Forest are perhaps the outstanding places. The music, dancing, and costumes of entertainers were bright and gay, the crowds friendly and simple, the food everywhere nondescript or bad, broken from the old tradition. I am not a gourmet, and I'm not presuming to assert this solely on my own authority. St Louis Germans all agree that traditional German cooking has gone completely to hell in St Louis, so far as public eating-places are concerned, since the death of Tony Faust and the other German restaurateurs of a generation ago. Milwaukee, Chicago, New York, still have their world-famous German restaurants where the *cuisine* rivals any on earth, but the glory has departed from St Louis. St Louis needn't mind, for otherwise it is a great and beautiful German-American metropolis, nucleus of a territory containing hundreds of thousands of beautiful American farms built with the homely Teutonic patience, thrift, and industry which Judge Grimm was praising; with a municipal opera in Forest Park seating ten thousand people in the open air, one of the finest examples of the adaptation of the old-world art of living to mass life in modern America. Beer and pretzels under the stars on a great wooded hillside . . . bringing the baby . . . hearing *Tristan und Isolde* . . . more frequently, the *Prince of Pilsen*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cincinnati, with its more than three-quarters of a million inhabitants, 40 per cent. of whom are solidly of German origin,

Chicago, of course, is a more cosmopolitan, conglomerate metropolis, despite its half-million Germanic population, its six hundred Germanic institutions, its six dozen outstanding Germanic edifices scattered all over fifty square miles in Cook County. Because the Chicago German picture was so diffuse Karl Eitel, of the Bismarck, had the kindly idea of inviting a few leading citizens to luncheon to help me. They included Ernest Kruetgen, Chicago's present postmaster, former head of the Board of Education, Director of the Century of Progress, millionaire engraver; the Reverend George L. Scherger, pastor of St Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, the oldest and largest in Chicago; Paul Ortmann, editor of the *Abendpost*; Dr Carl Beck, surgeon; Judge Immenhausen, of the Circuit Court—no ladies. His Honour the Mayor, being only partly German, waved to us from time to time from an

presents a more speeded Melting Pot phenomenon. They came there prior to the Civil War, and built it from a frontier trading-post into a thriving city, which was German-dominated for more than fifty years—up to the World War. In 1914 the City Commissioners still held many of their sessions in German, and the central crowded section, a basin sloping to the river and surrounded by hills, was thickly, noticeably German. To-day all that has changed. The German element has not really disappeared, though it seems to have done so. It is strong as ever, but it *has almost completely merged*. Culturally and industrially the old German families, Schmidts, Schneiders, Wohlgenuths, Schindlaffs, Goeppers, Roths—and even old Judge Louis K. Nippert—are now part of the American fabric. Mrs Guido Gores, who still lives in her magnificent old wooden mansion, is an American dowager, an American aristocrat. The same is true of the Wur-litzers. There were three Cincinnati *Turnvereins*. There is now only one. There were three or four German-language newspapers. There is now only the *Freie Presse*, edited by F. W. Elven. It too shall pass away. The foreign-language daily Press in America is dying a slow, unhurried, natural death, having served its period of greatest usefulness.

adjoining table. Mr Eitel, so much the spit an' image of Dr. Zeppelin Eckener that his own children have to look at him twice, was regretting that Cardinal Mundelein was out of town and couldn't be present at the luncheon. He was explaining also to his other guests that my name wasn't "Zeebrugge"—that only my *maternal* grandfather had been German. But this was enough to keep me welcome and start them talking about their own families, fathers, grandfathers, and each other.

Karl Eitel's father, founder of the Chicago fortunes, is now a fabulous old gentlemen of ninety-seven who lives in a villa near Stuttgart, has his glass of Rhine wine every morning, and never lets a day pass without quarrelling with his old friend, the Stuttgart mayor. The tale of how Eitel Senior installed a modern American elevator in his German castle and then tore it out has become a classic anecdote on both sides of the Atlantic. Kruetgen, it seemed, had just promoted his wife to "the sublime degree of chauffeur to the post-master," and a distinguished uncle of Dr Beck's, past eighty-two, had recently lost his temper on the Twentieth Century Limited when he found two young ladies in his berth by mistake, and had demanded that the guard throw one of them out. . . .

It was only when coffee came that they turned serious. They agreed with Ortmann, editor of the *Abendpost*, that Germany's chief contributions to Chicago had been solid, substantial business development, great music, and good cooking. Theodore Thomas, a long

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generation ago, had brought the best music of Europe to America, founded orchestras and opera societies, and forced good music down the throats of the then apathetic American public. After conducting in New York and founding the famous Cincinnati May Festival he finally founded the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and did in the West what the elder Damrosch was doing in the East. Frederick Stock, born in the Rhineland, succeeded Thomas, and is still head of the Chicago Symphony. John Philip Sousa incidentally was half German.

Outside of music, Mr Eitel thought, Germanic culture had merged so much into the American picture from the beginning that it was more fundamental than visible. For instance, all American universities to-day are patterned on the German concept which was brought to America with the founding of Johns Hopkins.

In addition to meeting these distinguished gentlemen I had brought with me to Chicago a friendly letter of introduction to a Bavarian youth named Walter, who knew "the common people" because he was one of them and worked in a retail bakery. He took me in tow for a couple of days, during which we visited popular restaurants, beer places, and a few of his friends who were carpenters, house-painters, and upholsterers, small storekeepers—a hairdresser. Three out of a dozen or so he introduced me to were Jewish or partly Jewish. Nobody seemed to care. Walter and his friends talked more freely over a cup of coffee or a glass of beer than



any of my more important, outstanding new German acquaintances had been willing to talk. Consuls, leading intellectuals, Germans in high official positions, some few editors of German-language newspapers, had been reticent, almost stuffy, when controversial subjects had been mentioned.

Walter said, "It's simple. They are all scared your book is going to be political, attacking or defending some group, intended to help or hurt some group, and they are afraid to be quoted. Us common Americans, myself and Otto here, who are Bavarian, and Joe here, who was a German Jew, but is an American now—we don't give a damn about those things over there. The swastika is still Hindu to us."

A Prussian-born house-painter named Eric, who had visited Germany last year, interrupted:

"Look now, I am a Catholic, and Joe here, who is a Hungarian Jew, is one of my buddies. I don't like what Hitler is doing to us Christians, to the Church, or to the Jews either, but everything has two sides. When I lived in Germany before Hitler took charge we had confusion and starvation, unemployment. I am blond and pug-nosed, but I couldn't get a job, and that's why I came away. There were thirty-five political parties, none of them strong enough to run anything, and everything was a lousy mess . . . unemployment, poverty, conditions worse than they were here when your banks closed. I went back there last winter on a visit, and everything is changed. Hitler has given the people food and jobs. Young men who can't get other jobs work now in agricultural camps, and everybody eats. It's two-sided, I tell

you, and it's over there in Europe, and I'm in favour of letting them settle it over there. These bull-headed, belly-aching German pro-Hitlerites and anti-Hitlerites over here who ought to be plain German Americans—or, better still, plain Americans—give me a pain in the eye."

When I went to supper that night with Walter, to the Bavarian Hofbrau on North Avenue, crowded with German Americans, I saw that Eric had been talking turkey for "the people" if not for the leaders. I mean simply that it was a popular German eating and dancing place with beer *Steins*, Tyrolean hats, and accordions, and that there was a considerable sprinkling of Jews, who seemed to be as much at home there and well served as anybody. We went later to a *Bierstube* owned and operated by an Austrian Jew, patronized by non-Jewish German people of his locality.

Walter had an older brother who worked in a big industrial plant, but told me that Germans generally kept out of organized labour groups—remained small independent artisans and storekeepers. He thought the only large Germanic groups engaged conspicuously in any single occupation were the farmers. He saw a parallel between the fact that the Germans as groups have never gone in very strongly for either state, national, or municipal politics and the fact that they are not conspicuous in labour groups or labour agitations. Walter was not an intellectual nor a proletarian sociologist. He was simply a wide-awake German youth who had come to America only eight years before, and was full of curiosity about how Germans in general were getting on in America. I felt that what he had been telling me might

be more illuminating than information from intellectuals—or cold statistical reports.

Between the Aryan and Jewish Germans in America he drew one sharp distinction, however, which may be basic. He said that many Germanic Jews, along with Russian and other Central European Jews, were affiliated with agitating labour groups, tinged with Red, communistic, radical-socialist, revolutionary. But the mass of the German Gentile group in America, by four-fifths the larger, were not generally radical, he insisted.

On another evening Professor James Taft Hatfield, who heads the German Department of North-western University, took me to dinner at the Germania Club, which is the most palatially ornate urban club edifice I have ever seen—a cross between the Harvard Club and the Potsdam Palace. Its cathedral ceilings glow with baroque beauty, not entirely oppressive, and not entirely in bad taste. In its chandeliered ballroom is the largest piece of faience ever baked in the royal Berlin pottery—a Rubens-like, heroic, allegorical picture of Germania, with other large, partially naked blonde ladies, bishops, angels-with-wings-and-trumpets-reposing-on-clouds . . . the Cologne Cathedral . . . old Father Rhine as a bibulous Neptune . . . everything but dragons and the kitchen stove. It came to the World's Fair in 1893, and was later built into the wall here. The whole big club is more or less like that. Its President is W. F. Jacobs, who is also President of the Mutual Life Insurance Company. It was oppressive and more or less deserted except by some elderly millionaires.

Professor Hatfield was inclined to scold German

Americans. He is permitted this privilege because he loves them and has devoted his life to a study of German culture in the United States. He said there at dinner, praising them, "German pride in slow, honest, lasting, self-respecting hard work has been a priceless value to our American national life. Under the surface of our haste their solid craftsmanship has done much to hold us together and keep us from falling to pieces from cheap smartness. And while German influence to-day may seem superficially almost non-existent, it is because it has become so completely merged. It is like the Christmas-tree, dolls, toys, which all came from Germany, as well as our universities, which are modifications of original German patterns. Even the circus is German."

The German Americans he scolded most are the pompous intellectuals who think that the German *Kultur* is the only culture, and are scornful even in the land of their adoption towards all other cultures.

"They forget," he said, "that we are an English-speaking nation, and that the fountainhead of our American civilization was the colony of Pilgrim fathers who landed in Plymouth in 1620. They transplanted to American soil the finest flower of British civilization, and there has been no break in that rich tradition. Our feeling towards the English language is like the German's reverence for the cathedral of Cologne, and a Herr Professor who tells us in an aggressively guttural accent, without being able to pronounce our 'th,' that his culture is the only culture—well, I, being a professor too, would say he is like a thorn in the eye, and you might say a pain in another part of the anatomy.

"We need the German intellectual culture, efficiency, sense of honour, dream of a better world—but we want them only in a form which is consistent with our own Anglo-Saxon self-respect and in harmony with the genius of our own civilization."

"You have certainly said a mouthful, Professor," I said, "and I hope you'll live a hundred years to keep on talking that way. It's good conversation." He finished his abstemious glass of Rhine wine, said a few things in pure German to the *maitre d-hôtel*, who had been listening discreetly, with great respect, and I went away thinking that most people, even including German head waiters, generally respect outspoken honesty.

They still sing "*Ist das nicht ein Ochsen blas?*" at Mader's restaurant in Milwaukee, oldest and most famous German eating-house out there, but it seemed to me that the *langer Mann* on the Schnitzel Bank charts which adorned the wall now definitely resembled Uncle Sam, and I am wondering if what I imagined I saw in the *langer Mann* is not perhaps significant of Milwaukee. The menus in this truly German restaurant still include *Bratwurst*, *Sauerbraten* with noodles, pork shanks with *Sauerkraut*, *Hasenpfeffer mit Klösse* (which means rabbit stew with dumplings), and cheese *Torte* built like inverted pyramids in the old tradition, but the place is modernly air-cooled, and the crowds which eat there look like any other crowds of prosperous Americans. They are largely of German origin, but you'd never know it to look at them or hear them talk.

Friends told me that in 1912 Milwaukee was so Ger-

manly German that sentimentalists called it "the Munich of America." The older ones said they remembered farther back when some of its stores had signs in their windows saying, "English spoken here." Others said emphatically they didn't remember "anything of the sort," and I don't know which were stringing me, for I was also told that the Oehlin family, who had made a vast fortune in beer, possessed a solid gold table service worth "three million dollars." I said I didn't believe it—and if it ever had been true I supposed the Government had melted it down. My own impression of Milwaukee to-day is that, like the *langer Mann* who seemed to me to resemble Uncle Sam, it is now Americanly German. Schlitz, Pabst, Blatz, etc., are famous *American* names known to Hottentots and sailors on the Seven Seas, and Victor Berger was a famous *American* Socialist. But whether Milwaukee was the Munich of America up to 1912 or not, it was pretty definitely a German colony back in 1835, because they seriously petitioned Congress to make Wisconsin an all-German State! Milwaukee now has over half a million people, of whom perhaps only about a fourth are of predominantly German ancestry, but Germanic elements in its cultural and social life still retain vitality and colour.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cleveland is a model in Melting Pot technique. With a million inhabitants, representing almost every nationality on the face of the globe, 25,947 German-born Germans and 74,000 citizens of German stock, it is not merely a Melting Pot, but also a laboratory *par excellence*, in which the process is being locally studied and analysed. Co-operating with Cleveland's own Chamber of Commerce, headed by President Hermann R. Neff, whose healthy interest in these matters should make some other cities blush, is John H. Farrell, of the United States Department of Commerce. Both these gentlemen and their organizations were

In common with its surroundings and adjacent Middle Western states, Wisconsin is one of the areas where rural agricultural population of foreign-language origin is thickest, and by far its largest element is unquestionably Scandinavian and German. From my stay in Minnesota I remembered that Germans seemed almost as numerous as the Swedes in rural sections, and I also remembered that my Swedish farmer friend Oscar Johnson had a daughter named Greta, who was married to a German near Center City. So I telephoned over to Minneapolis and got myself invited to Swedish Greta's German farm.

Her German farmer husband, named Oscar, too, had been told I was a friendly writer, so he piloted me

so kind to me that it is a pleasure and duty to thank them. Mr Farrell was an American machine-gunner in the World War, and one of his most sympathetic collaborators is Mr J. F. Schreier, official of the Central National Bank, who was a Uhlan in the World War. In 1917 they were trying to kill each other. They now frequently lunch together, and sometimes invite Theodore Andrica, of the *Cleveland Press*, who conducts a regular department in that great American newspaper, devoted locally and intensively to subjects on which a book like this can only touch the high spots. Andrica has already published a series of more than a hundred pieces, entitled *Around the World in Cleveland*, which should be studied by every other heterogeneous city in America. As part of Cleveland's park system there are beautiful German gardens, with German shrubs, trees, flowers, and statuary. (Also Italian, Polish, Russian, Scandinavian gardens.) In other words, Cleveland recognizes itself as a Melting Pot, works at it, arrives at mutual happy understandings, and has less tension among foreign-language race groups than any other city. To this harmonious understanding the Germans, whose largest immigration waves came in the seventies and eighties, have contributed their part. They have become mostly wholesale grocers, brewers, bankers, manufacturers, tailors, carpenters, skilled craftsmen, and artisans. Comparatively few of them are employed as factory labour in the rolling mills and other steel-iron industries, and they constitute no special labour problem whatsoever. Big German names in Cleveland are Grothe, Weideman, Spang, Schuele, Richman, Kundtz—sewing-

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straight to the big, clean kitchen, but said, with a bewildered, frowning grin. "Vat iss all dis, anyway?"

"It's nothing," I said, "except that I'm going to try to write about Germans too."

"Vell," said he, "I'm German. Vill you drink beer or coffee?"

Greta was beaming, of course, because I had said nice things about her papa. She made me write in an auto-graph album for her blond, square-headed, super-Nordic little son, who was naturally named Oscar too. He is named Oscar after his Swedish grandpa and his German papa, and he speaks only English, and he is an American little boy. He has slight traces of his papa's tendency to say V for W, but if you think he is anything but an American little boy you're crazy.

machines, groceries, bakeries, dry goods, clothing, furniture, respectively. Former Mayor Hermann Baer stands out in any list of important citizens, and Dr J. Arthur Nussen is the director of Cleveland's United Singing Societies, which were founded in a cooper's shop in 1863. The Cleveland Symphony is famous. The German *Turnvereins* support all cultural movements in Cleveland. There are Swiss-German, Hungarian, Austrian organizations, all encouraged to be proud of their origins, and proud also of their merging.

Buffalo's hundred thousand or so Germanic population has been stirred into its half-million pretty thoroughly, and constitutes no special labour problems. More than 60 per cent. of the hundred thousand are skilled mechanics, carpenters, bakers, and butchers. The hotels and restaurants employ about 15 per cent. Buffalo has 102 German Societies and Lodges. Paul Hemmerich, General Manager of the Duffy Silk Mills, and Henry W. Brendl, lawyer and philanthropist, are almost as important as Frank X. Schwab, who has been twice Mayor of Buffalo. Charles Ulrich is County Treasurer; William M. Eberhardt is Sheriff of Erie County; George J. Zimmermann is the present Mayor of Buffalo; Leo Schmidt is County Commissioner of Welfare and Corrections. A hundred other gentlemen with German names, some of them German-born, are important Buffalo entities now—as American as the animal which gives their city its name.



I must stay to dinner, and Greta, because she is "German" now, must make me an apple *Strudel*. During the course of dinner Oscar Senior opened up, and I know, from what he told me, that there must be many thousands of little Oscars scattered through the Middle West. He said that in his own childhood the Yankees still talked about "dumb Heinies" and "dumb Swedes," and mentioned other things which had drawn Germans and Swedes together, made good neighbours, frequent marriages—cleanliness with a tendency to scrub pots and faces till they were shiny; coffee at all hours of the day, beer at meals and of evenings—and, of course, the Lutheran Church. The only thing really that makes German Oscar much different from American John is his slight accent and his habit of drinking coffee at all ungodly hours of the day and night. His barns, silos, machinery, telephone, radio, political opinions—and children—aren't any different, really, from those of his prosperous, rural Yankee neighbours.

One day in Rochester, playing truant from this German job, and being invited by some ladies to the ultra-snooty Century Club for luncheon, I sat beside a grand, gay dame, who listened, amused, to my remarks about Germans, and finally told me she was Mrs Bausch! High, low, in factory jumpers and be-furred in limousines, Rochester is close to half German. But it's German the way hot dogs are German. That is to say, it's American. Famous for lenses and optical instruments, it is no coincidence, I think, that over 40 per cent. of Rochester's population is of German origin. Both in

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the Bausch and Lomb optical plant and in the Eastman Kodak plant, which is of English-American ancestry, so to speak, a majority of the most highly skilled scientific artisans are Germanic. Many of the instructors and musicians in the Eastman School of Music and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra are Germans. The *Abendpost*, Rochester's German daily newspaper, now edited by Brother Hermann Ferno, has served the Germans of Rochester continuously for eighty-eight years. There are eighty-five German societies and thirty German churches in Rochester.

Dropping down among the Pennsylvania Dutch back East was revisiting scenes of my own childhood. In spite of cars, radios, telephones, and tractors, they haven't changed much. They compose, you know, about a third of the total population of Pennsylvania, and while most of them are indistinguishable from any other prosperous urban and rural "native sons," there are still large groups of Mennonites and Amish who tenaciously hold to the customs, manners, and dress of their ancestors. The men wear black suits, wide-brimmed clerical hats, and grow beards; the women wear drab dresses and wear bonnets; the boys and youths let their hair grow long; and in some rural districts they retain to a fantastic degree the old customs, folklore, tradition, habits—and sometimes superstitions—which they brought to America a hundred years before the Revolution. In some districts they are a bit reactionary and obstructive about sending their children to modern public schools, high schools. They prefer

the little, rural schoolhouses where the whole handful of kids is Amish, and often the teacher is too. They are prosperous, rigidly honest, not inhospitable, but a strange world to themselves, thickest around Allentown, York, Lancaster, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Easton, Lebanon, Chambersburg, Stroudsburg. Elsie Singmaster, whom I knew years ago, has done a grand job telling how they resisted motor-cars, radios, modern inventions of the devil, finally succumbing a little to their practicality, retaining, however, their shovel hats and clothes fastened with hooks and eyes. Motor-cars and telephones are now put to the uses of the Lord, but the button is still anathema, because it is a symbol of military conscription—of the old grenadier's uniform—war. Go among them without knowing why they refuse to wear buttons, and it seems silly, but behind it was the thirty years of butchery, rape, enforced conscription, religious persecution, devastation, which they fled from after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, and when the Spanish came to ravage them again.

They were spiritual kin to Quaker William Penn, who visited them in the Palatine and converted one old gentleman who became the ancestor of Herbert Hoover. When Penn was granted Pennsylvania he immediately invited these Palatine priests to join him. Hence the Pennsylvania Dutch, who are, of course, pure German. Their *Mayflower* was the *Concord*; their Plymouth Rock was Philadelphia; their date 1683; their leader was Pastorius. For a while it was beautiful—and then around 1750 it got to be a shipping racket. Hordes of Palatine peasants signed papers on false promises, and

found themselves bond servants, serfs, when they arrived in America. I have the photograph of a "want ad." of the period which reads, "German female servant is for sale. She has five years to serve." And a "personal" of 1755 on which a whole romantic novel might be written. It reads, "Rosina Dorothea Kost desires to let her brother-in-law at Conestoga know of her sale at public vendue." If she was pretty, my bet would be that Mrs Brother-in-law didn't let him buy her. Some of this was rather horrible, and might make a wickedly beautiful grand opera. The ships became known as "slave ships," and one arrived with only fifty of its four hundred passengers still alive. But by 1763 there were over 300,000 German immigrants in Pennsylvania, already seeping into New York, Maryland, later into Virginia, and the Middle West. Maronites, Shakers, Seventh Day Adventists, Inspired Depellians, Mountain Men and River Brethren, Atheists, Naturalists—and, of course, the Amish, Mennonites, and Moravians. Their superstitions, hexings, powwows, and quaint sex customs are still sometimes fantastic, but if their heads were woozy with religious mysticism they not only had their feet solidly on the ground, but dug their toenails deep into it—founded the Bethlehem Iron Company, which is now Bethlehem Steel, and still has a Pennsylvania Dutchman, Charlie Schwab, at its head.

The Fricks and many other coal kings are of Pennsylvania-Dutch ancestry, like the Woolworths, Wanamakers, Hersheys, and David O. Saylor, whose name is another way of saying Portland Cement.

Yet the Amish farmer—if he is one who clings to old tradition—still paints his gate blue when his daughter wants to get married, and if you're invited to the wedding you may eat rabbit cake, a delicious dish, which isn't cake at all, and isn't made with rabbits. If it's a home wedding it lasts all day. There may be several hundred guests, two big feasts, and a preacher whose discourse flows for several hours. Their regional cooking is famous, and what they can do with a chicken or duck is only surpassed by their cakes and custards. If the bridegroom wants to be sure of begetting a son, and adheres to the ancient beliefs, he keeps his boots on when he goes to bed, and carries a whip.

If you have the good luck to meet Dr George Korson, of Bucknell University at Lewisburg, which is in the heart of it, and he invites you to stay over for a folk festival you'll eat marvellous Pennsylvania-Dutch food with Percy B. Rhue and Irene Welty, hear Bessie and Paul Haas sing *There's a Hole in the Jug*, and hear the whole Concordia male chorus of Sunbury combining with the Williamsport Turnverein in folk-songs.

You'll see costumed games—and hear “The baby is livergrown and cannot sleep,” “The horse-collar helps when nothing else can,” “Stirring cornmeal,” “Spin, my daughter”—and when the baby is cured you will hear it put to sleep with a lullaby, *Schlafe, Bubblic, Schlafe*, sung by Paul Wieand, so beautiful that it will almost make you want to cry.

You'll be hearing most of this in Pennsylvania-Dutch dialect, and it will have to be translated afterwards for you by Pumpnickel Bill, who is Mr Wil-

liam S. Troxell, of the *Allentown Morning Call*. Some of this folk-festival stuff is so strange and beautiful that it is broadcast every year in midsummer over one of the national networks from Bucknell Memorial Stadium.

There is another side, of course, to this attractive picture. Wherever you have deep religious piety combined with tenacious clinging to archaic traditions you will always find sinister backwashes and backwaters in which dark superstitions thrive. The area to-day in Europe where black magic survives in its most evil form is precisely the diocese of Lyons in the valley of the Rhône, where you also find medieval Catholicism strongest. Similarly, there is no area in the United States to-day where witchcraft, hexing, and powwows have a stronger hold among the illiterate and neurasthenic white minorities than precisely among these generally sound, up-coming, clear-minded Pennsylvania Dutch. Occasionally the lid blows off, as in the case of the "box murder" trial a few years ago in York.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Edgar Miller Fogel, Ph.D., in his doctor's thesis for the University of Pennsylvania, afterwards revised for publication as *Beliefs and Superstitions of the Pennsylvania Dutch*, says:

"Belief in witches has not died out here any more than in Great Britain or Germany, and powwowing is still practised to a greater or less extent."

The witches and powwow men naturally do not tell or advertise their methods of casting evil spells, but the counter-charms to ward off witchcraft which have been collected and recorded in Pennsylvania are not always innocent and pretty, either.

Here are a few of them:

Nail a toad's foot over the stable door to drive and keep the witches out of the stable.

Cut off the ears of a black cat, burn them, and feed the ashes to the witch.

To discover a witch cut the two sleeves out of your husband's shirt and burn them.

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While including their superstitions (which lurk only in backwashes), along with the admirable qualities of what is by and large one of the finest groups of citizens in America, I am quite aware that practices and superstitions equally unpretty may be found among Yankee farmers in parts of New England, among Welsh miners occasionally in West Virginia, among whites as well as Negroes in the deep South—in short, among groups in which neither German origin nor any other foreign-language origin has any bearing on the picture. My own blood is partly Pennsylvania Dutch, and I am not wishing to be guilty of scandalizing my own people.

Having been born down across the line in Westminster, Maryland, and remembering that the Germans had spilled down in great numbers over the near-by Pennsylvania border—Carroll County was full of them in my childhood, and still is—I thought I'd go down into Maryland and have a look at it. I remembered also that a distinguished German American named Henry L. Mencken still lived in a once German city

To discover a witch draw a picture of the suspect, load your gun with a dime, and shoot at the picture. The spot where you hit the picture will correspond to the mark to be found on the body of the witch.

The witches will appear if you put seven new needles and some urine of a child into a bottle, and then put the bottle under lock and key.

Hang the vagina of a cow in the horse stable to keep out witches.

If you lay a bewitched gun in a creek the witch can't urinate until she comes to you for forgiveness.

Load the gun with a silver bullet.

Shoot at a witch, if you wish to hit her, either with a bullet made from crooked dimes or coins which have been pierced.

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named Baltimore—and sent him a couple of telegrams. The result was that I flew down from Philadelphia to a luncheon arranged with Mr Mencken's pontifical blessing, presided over by Karl A. M. Scholtz, head of the German Historical Society and active in the German Society of Maryland. Guests included Pastor Fritz Evers, a tall, rugged, beautiful old man, head of historic Zion Church, founded in 1755, and which has had precisely three pastors in a hundred years: O. H. Franke, a large, blond German gentleman representing the Hamburg-American and North German Lloyd Lines; Louis L. Kurtz, and some others.

"I'd thought of calling my book *These Foreigners*, but you seem pretty much at home here," I said to them over the *Sauerbraten*, and Scholtz said, with a grin:

"We spilled over the Maryland line back in the days of William Penn, and we're native sons now. When the Czechs, Poles, Lithuanians, Italians, Greeks, came in hordes in the eighties and nineties we were native sons, and the last wave of German immigrants who piled in at about the same time were 'coming home' to us in Baltimore. Up until 1900 you could go from one end of this city to another without ever speaking English; the city was still covered with typically German beer-gardens, picnic grounds, and amusement parks built by the old brewers, Wiessner, Bauernschmidt, Brehm, Guenther; big tobacco factories controlled by Germans, imports, shipbuilding, pianos—Knabe and Stieff.

"We built Baltimore financially and culturally, but we never did much in politics, and never have yet. We weren't politically-minded. Some of our own fathers



fought as volunteers in the Civil War, but never bothered to be naturalized so they could vote afterwards!<sup>1</sup>

"You can look in vain to-day for a German section or district in Baltimore, but what survives like a mighty fortress is German language and tradition in the Lutheran Church. Pastor Evers here preaches every Sunday in German . . . holds Vespers in English only once a month."

Mr Franke told us how shipping between Bremen and the port of Baltimore had brought about the existence of the North German Lloyd.

Scholtz told how, as an errand boy at a type foundry, he had had a hand in the invention of the linotype. A man named Mergenthaler wanted an old casting pot to experiment with, and Scholtz carted it to him on a wheelbarrow. . . .

A prominent local Irish politician stopped at our table just then to greet my distinguished friends. Scholtz grabbed him, and asked me if I knew what was the greatest invention of the Irish. I said, "No," and Scholtz said, "The wheelbarrow. It taught them to walk on their hind-legs."

<sup>1</sup> Baltimore's municipal anthem was written by Emma Hemberger; the Director of Peabody Institute is Otto Ortmann; Hans Schuler, whose father ran a German newspaper, is Director of the Maryland Institute Art School; Gustave Strube founded the Baltimore Symphony—but all this German tradition is a part of the common American heritage now. Adolph Meyer, of Johns Hopkins, is of Swiss-German origin. Out in the farming regions, the whole length of Western Maryland, from the Chesapeake on through Frederick and Hagerstown, German farmers have made and still make, just as in Pennsylvania, the prosperity of the commonwealth; while two-thirds of the white population of Baltimore is still Germanic stock.

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With all their gaiety they were sad because Pastor Evers had recently buried the greatest Maryland German of our generation, the philanthropist Henry G. Hilken, who had given millions to cultural and civic betterment. The old man had died at the age of ninety; the Mayor of Baltimore and the new German Ambassador had been among the pallbearers.

"He looked like an old Bremen senator as he lay there in the coffin," said Scholtz.

"Do you remember," he asked me, "when Captain Paul Koenig startled the world by running all blockades and bringing the U-boat *Deutschland* into Baltimore? It was the night of July 10, 1916."

"It was *not*," said Pastor Evers; "it was the night of July 16."

"It *was* the night of July 10," said Scholtz.

"You're wrong," said Pastor Evers. "My youngest daughter was born on that same night. The German submarine and the German stork came on the same night."

"*I give up*," said Scholtz. "But what I wanted to tell you was that the cargo was consigned to Hilken. He gave me sixteen bottles of old Rhenish wine from it. We drank the last bottle in 1932, or I would have offered you some to-day. There's nothing of that cargo left now but some Havana cigars with silk bands, black-white-and-red, too dry to smoke, which we keep as souvenirs. Some of our sons fought and died for the United States in the War, but we were proud of that U-boat, the *Deutschland*."

"The whole world was proud of it," I said; "it was one of the greatest exploits in the annals of the seas."

After luncheon they took me to see the bronze five-ton statue of Martin Luther which had been recently unveiled at the Mount Royal Avenue entrance to Druid Park. It had been presented to the municipality by a Baltimore German jeweller, Arthur Wallenhorst, who also gave four immense public clocks to playgrounds—to prevent the kids, he said, from stopping him to ask what time it was!

“Yorkville,” New York City’s famous German colony, is an extensive district centring around the junction of Lexington Avenue and 86th Street, on Manhattan’s upper East Side. It is the largest and most colourful “German” tourist showplace in the Western Hemisphere. Visited superficially for fun, spots of it are almost like a tourist Chinatown or Coney Island set-up—musical-comedy *Bierstubes*, *Hofbraus*, good and bad, Tyrolean hats and feathers, accordions, barmaids in costumes, souvenir postcards, “Bavarians” who are Bavarian the same way Fred Waring’s “Pennsylvanians” are Pennsylvanian, bawling, “*Ist das nicht ein booby hatch?*” In one of the big places where we drank *Muenchner* from pewter-topped earthen *Steins* the sad, kindly waiter, human beneath his bright Bavarian comic-opera costume, confided to me that he was a ruined baron from the Baltic Provinces, and that half his fellow-“Bavarians” were Prussian!

*Ja, das ist ein booby hatch*, if you ask me. Yorkville, as some of its good old residents will tell you, has been “contaminated by its fame.” But all this is superficial, like the foam on beer. Yorkville still leads, and

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always has, a substantial, serious, and respectable life of its own, with its own societies, clubs, groups, organizations, which the tourists never see. The centre of this life is the large, impressive Turnverein building at the corner of Lexington Avenue and 85th Street, with its ballroom, public restaurant on the ground floor, where I had a classic German luncheon with Hans Jaeger, Herr Palme, of the *Staats-Zeitung*, and some of his helpful colleagues.

The Turnverein is an old German gymnastic organization, over eighty years old, which still maintains the old Germanic customs originated by "Turnvater Jahn." It sponsors athletics, basket-ball, callisthenics, bowling, etc., and conducts a free school for children of German families which supplements regular public schooling with training in German reading, writing, grammar, etc. It is nation-wide in extent. The New York Turnverein maintains a hall for the use of German clubs, social and athletic events, entertainment, dancing.

The Turnverein is consequently a centre of activities for the numerous German clubs of Yorkville. Its older residents are organized into clubs according to the part of Germany they came from, as Amt Ostener Verein, and Westphälischer Damen, and Hessen-Darmstädter Verein, which put on monthly entertainments consisting of plays, or music and folk-dancing—exhibition and social dances. There are also many women's *Kaffee-Klatscher*, or coffee-gabbing clubs, often of a benevolent nature, which hold monthly or semi-monthly meetings. The women drink coffee and eat cakes, talking and working as at an American "sewing bee."

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In 1900 a group of German girls of Yorkville organized the Twentieth-century Club, a bowling club. In 1937 the same "girls," now elderly women, may be seen at the Turnverein still bowling with the old vigour. These women, many of them, have moved away from Yorkville, yet the old custom and association bring them back, sometimes by subway from Brooklyn and the Bronx, and occasionally by limousine with uniformed chauffeurs from Westchester and Long Island.

There are *Maenner* and *Damen* choral clubs, children's clubs, ski clubs, which are "teaching Americans how to ski"—over eighty of these organizations using Turn Hall for their activities. The Germans take great pleasure in transplanting old ways and culture, enriching the land of their adoption and making it more pleasant to live in.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The American youth hostels, patterned after the famous youth hostels of Germany, now dot New York and neighbouring states with establishments where German-American young people, along with young friends of any racial origin, hiking and cycling through their own country, can be housed reasonably and congenially at the end of the day's trip. It is a step, perhaps, towards a renaissance in America of the gaiety and folk spirit and daring of the *Wander-vogel*. The Student Exchange, sending every year American students to Germany and German students to American universities, performs the double function of promoting mutual understanding and perpetuating through American students the best in German education. The New York German people have several employment agencies, of which the German-American Conference is typical. The Conference handles chiefly immigrants, skilled workers who have served apprenticeships in Germany—cabinet-makers, mechanics, *chefs*, upholsterers, leather-workers, etc., metal-workers, about six thousand a year. With the co-operation of the E.W.B. the Conference also organized the "Craftsmen's Master Guild," for rehabilitation for unemployed workers, and sold handicraft products. Hauptmann, Lindbergh kidnap murderer, who was a good carpenter, displayed and sold work at its exhibition. The unemployed workers at the agency are German-speaking, polite,

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In painful contrast to all the above societies and organizations I now come to the one which gets the biggest newspaper headlines these days—to “der American Führer,” Fritz Lieber Kuhn, his German-American Bund, his Nazi “Storm Troopers,” and his alleged 200,000 adherents. I think 20,000 would be a truer total, but, whatever their number, they are not nice little boys by any American standard. Apart from their non-proven smearing of synagogues with swastikas, their hatred and persecution of American Hebrew fellow-citizens, the bad taste in the United States of their military uniforms, parades, *heils*, and Nazi salutes, they publish at 178 East 85th Street, in Yorkville, which is also headquarters for their national organization, a sheet called the *Deutscher Weckruf*, and

intelligent, and definitely of skilled mechanic and artisan type. From an idealistic Melting Pot standpoint the most important of all German-American organizations is probably the Steuben Society, whose national headquarters are in Lexington Towers, on Lexington Avenue, with Theodore H. Hoffmann as National Chairman. It is devoted to the support of the Constitution of the United States, quickening the spirit of sound Americanism, protecting political liberty by keeping it free from all foreign influences, maintaining an honest equality of citizenship, regardless of birth, origin, or religion. Doing a splendid, somewhat parallel work from Philadelphia is the Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation, for the development of cultural relations between the United States and Germany, co-operating directly with American universities and colleges. Its honorary President is Jacob Gould Schurman. Its President is Ferdinand Thun, the textile and steel magnate. The Travellers Aid Society, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the Sick and Death Benefit Society, the Legal Aid Society, the famous Glee Club Singers, were all originally founded by Germans. They have outgrown their origins, and are purely American now. There are over a thousand German clubs and societies in Greater New York. Other club-houses in Yorkville are the New York Liederkrantz, Kreutzer Hall, Mozart Hall, Franziskauer, German-American A.C., Austria Hall, German Labour Temple.

there it is every week, and you can read it. It sensationally and continually disparages America and things American, foments discord, says democracy is broken down in the United States, writes sensational subversive stuff to the *Kamarads* "behind the curtain." I maintain that what Hitler does to Germans in Germany is none of America's business—but these fellows in America are not nice.

If you visit their headquarters or their newspaper office, and are not an avowed adherent or admirer, you will find them suspicious to the point of stupidity, surly, aggressive, and antagonistic. They will see to it that you don't meet Fritz Kuhn if they can help it, but if you do meet him you will meet a strong personality, a man endowed with considerable force and intelligence, and with a lot of personal magnetism. He is a square-faced, clean-cut and clean-shaven, heavy-jawed German, quite handsome, over six feet tall, apparently in his late forties. He was a machine-gunner in the German Army during the World War, and was decorated with the Iron Cross. After the War he attended the University of Munich, took a Master's Degree in Science, went to America in 1927, and became a chemical engineer in the Ford plant in Detroit. In January 1937 he resigned to become the leader of the German-American Bund.

The Bund to-day claims through its self-styled Führer to have a membership of a quarter of a million, and has frightened some Americans, including Jewish Congressman Dickstein and a number of rabbis, into believing it. An investigation, however, made recently by Frank C. Hanighen for *Foreign Affairs* into alien

political movements in the United States seems to prove pretty definitely that the true figures are closer to 20,000. Small as the total is, they are extremely aggressive and vociferous, and give the impression, though they deny it, of forming a definitely alien influence which owes allegiance to a foreign Power and supports a system of government at variance with American democracy. They have never been caught yet directly attacking the American Government, but their constant glorification of Hitler's totalitarian system is, to say the least, an indirect attack on America. Furthermore, like the militant Communists, they take orders from abroad.

Their so-called "Storm Troopers" present the offensive spectacle of an alien military organization, drilling and parading in America, and engaging in other semi-military activities. The most generous estimate anybody except a few alarmist Jews can give these uniformed Storm Troopers is less than 5000, so that, even if they were armed with rifles and machine-guns, they constitute an "armed threat" so trivial as to be ridiculous so far as the stability of the American Government is concerned—but nevertheless I think their mere existence is offensive, no matter how puerile its force may be in actuality.

Joseph F. Dinneen, who spent several months in 1937 investigating this unpleasant phenomenon for one of the big national magazines, found seventy-eight local units in the larger cities. The principal centres, he said, were Los Angeles and San Francisco, California; Seattle, Washington; Portland, Oregon; Detroit, Michigan; Toledo and Cleveland, Ohio; Pittsburgh,



Pennsylvania; Boston, Massachusetts; Baltimore, Maryland; Washington, D. C.; Trenton, Newark, and Passaic and Bergen counties, in New Jersey; Staten Island, the Bronx, Yorkville, Manhattan, and Jamaica, in New York; also Sheboygan, Schenectady, Buffalo, and Kenosha. And Mr Dinneen, contrary to the findings of the Hanighen investigation, believes they have almost as large a membership as they claim.

But, whatever the truth may be about their total strength, there are apparently only nine camps scattered throughout the country where German-American youth is actually drilled in German military tactics and taught the goose-step, along with the political philosophy of Hitler. The camp which has aroused the most antagonism and got the most publicity is the one at Yaphank, Long Island. An unpleasant if microscopic spot in the picture is that Frank Mutschinski, of Brooklyn, testified before the Dickstein-McCormack congressional committee that he had drilled 200 men weekly in New York, in German uniforms, with both real and wooden rifles, and that similar things had been going on in Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia. When the Bund last held a parade in New York, with permission and police protection, about half of the 900 marchers wore Bund uniforms, grey shirts with black neckties, Sam Browne belts, black overseas caps—but carried no weapons. Instead of wooden guns or toy pistols, as it were, many had flashlights in their right hip pockets. Despite the fact that they carried fifteen American flags, along with half a dozen swastika flags of Nazi Germany, there were 1500 police and detectives on

special duty—more police than there were marchers in the parade. Apart from a trivial incident in which a bystander was poked on the nose by another bystander for saluting the Nazi flag, the crowds merely hissed and booed or cheered and applauded as the parade wound its way through "Yorkville."

Fritz and his Nazi Bund make a great deal of unpleasant noise. I think it is offensive, not as constituting a serious menace, but simply because the thing is characteristically tactless and in abominably bad taste—imposing on the easygoing tolerance of a free country. I believe, from what I was able to learn from visiting nearly every area thick with Germanic population in America, that the Hanighen survey which gives the Bund only about 20,000 is probably correct.<sup>1</sup> But how-

<sup>1</sup> A sad by-product of Hitlerism and anti-Hitlerism among the Germans themselves in America is that it has aroused old Semitic and anti-Semitic antagonisms, prejudices, and propaganda, particularly around New York and in the East. Owing to the boycott a distinct anti-Semitic trend is noticeable, while a good many German-Jewish leaders have withdrawn their co-operation and financial support from the Carl Schurz and other foundations. It is a situation mutually regretted, and another reason for my assertion that the Kuhn Nazi Bund activities in a free democracy are an imposition on the political tolerance of Americans, are stupid, and in abominably bad taste. I think that if Hitler wants Americans to respect and admire the rehabilitation he has wrought in Germany the smartest thing he could possibly do would be to order Fritz Kuhn to pipe down and disband his "Storm Troops" in America. If Hitler doesn't, I could hope that some good German Americans might see what a black eye it gives them and persuade him to pipe down. A lot of German Americans have forgotten the spirit of their German-American forefathers. They lack the moral courage of Carl Schurz and the true liberals of 1848. It was one of their own leaders, regretting this, who said to me, "Neither the organized Germans nor the Press are fulfilling in America the mission of democracy of which Americans of German descent were always so proud."

ever that may be, considering that there are in America something like twenty million citizens with German blood in their veins, of whom five million still speak with German accents, the violent Nazi group is more like a pimple than a cancer. My guess is that most of Fritz Kuhn's younger "Storm Troopers" will marry nice American girls and have American babies and forget all about it. The Melting Pot will boil them down, while Fritz himself and a handful of his organizers may go back to Germany and be paid some money.

To sum up Hitlerism in America, the still obviously Germanic population of more than five million (of whom nearly two million are Austrian and Hungarian) divides itself, I think, about as follows: 70 per cent. totally indifferent; 20 per cent. definitely anti-Nazi; 9 per cent. pro-Nazi in a sense consistent with loyalty to the U.S.A.; 1 per cent., or less, rabidly, militantly Nazi in a not nice way.

In solemn conclusion,<sup>1</sup> to drop Fritz Kuhn's tiny group, and privileged because I myself am of partly German blood, I dare to say that the five or six million German Americans still in process of melting constitute the most important, and most admirable, and generally loyal, but least lovable of all the foreign-language race groups in the United States. This is to a considerable extent America's own fault. Americans gave them a hard time twenty years ago. Neighbours made it difficult for them to be loving or lovable. They got into

<sup>1</sup> "What they need and lack," disagreed a German-American author-friend of mine when I told him how I intended to end this chapter, "is not kindness but just a good dose of plain, ordinary American common sense."

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habits of being stuffy, aggressive. But I wish they would realize that America is a kindly land, good at forgiving and forgetting, ready always to meet, more than half-way, people who are also willing to forgive and forget. The way for them to become better loved is open. It is for them to become more loving, more tolerant, sweeter, more friendly, more kind.

### GERMANIC POSTSCRIPT CONCERNING THE HOLLAND DUTCH IN THE U.S.A.

"Dutchman" in American slang, whether East or West, corn-field or metropolitan freight-yard, is identical with "Fritz" and "Heinie." In slang it means German. The Holland Dutchman, of course, is in reality a totally different animal, but since he is definitely Germanic, and gets philologically if not factually confused with other Teutons on American payrolls and street-corners, I thought it might be well to include mention of him here.

Discovering the current salient facts about him turned out to be a pleasant and comparatively easy job. Relegating New Amsterdam and Rip Van Winkle, along with the old Bronx, all the Duyvils, Kills, Kips, Van Rensselaers, Knickerbockers, Stuyvesants, to their high place in pre-Revolutionary history, and considering fifth- and seventh-generation families like the Vanderbilts and Roosevelts as purely American now—there are only 133,133 imported Hollanders in the United States to-day, as against the several million Germans about whom I have been writing.

The first thing I learned was that they know all about themselves, who they are, what they are, where they are, what they do, and whose cousins will be coming over from Rotterdam about the time this book is published, to make the total 133,147.

We all learned at school what the long-dead Holland Dutch contributed to early American history. I soon learned now that the colour and culture they have contributed to twentieth-century Melting Pot America consists principally of vast fields of tulips, which are all the colours of the rainbow, and large numbers of professors, more soberly pigmented, who adorn the faculties of the big universities and colleges.

The first thing to do if you want a picturesque impression of Hollanders in America is to go to Holland, Michigan, where Paul de Kruif was born and brought up. You fly to Grand Rapids, drive fifteen miles out to the town of Holland, and you're in the centre of a suburban rural area which has a Dutch population of 32,128 Hollanders who grow bulbs, food crops, and everything else that will sprout from the ground. If you go there in tulip season you'll see the annual Farmers' Festival, with a procession headed by pretty Dutch girls in rainbow costumes and wooden shoes, who wash the streets and sweep with brooms as they go. You can go to "Little Holland," near Brookville, Long Island, and see John Scheepers—and when you see him you'll see a great man. Born in Holland of a tulip family, he is the world's leading authority on bulbs, and their foremost grower in the Western Hemisphere. He grows daffodils, jonquils, hyacinths, lilies, giants, foxtails, Japs, bulbs

you have never heard of, and wins the International Sweepstake flower awards like clockwork every year. He has written text-books on the subject, and a visit to the Long Island formal gardens in the Brookville region will make you gasp. Other famous Dutch bulb-growers in America are Jan de Graaff, at Sandy, Oregon; A. M. van den Hoek, at Bridgeton, New Jersey; Henry Harbosch, M. van Waveren, the Van Zonneveld family, in the New York region. If you go to see any of them to learn about bulbs they'll tell you everything.

The Holland Dutch in America are beautifully organized. They have a Netherlands Chamber of Commerce in the Chrysler Building; a Netherland-America Foundation in Stuyvesant Square, with Thomas J. Watson as President; Knickerbocker Societies in Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, and other leading cities. They can tell you in two seconds that there are 14,909 Holland Americans in New York State, and that one of them named Helen married H. P. Davis (brother of Owen and Bob), who used to be President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Haiti. They can tell you that Dr A. J. Barnouw is Queen Wilhelmina Netherlands Professor at Columbia, and that Hendrik Willem van Loon's dachshund was ill last week at Old Greenwich. Dr Neil van Aken at the Chamber of Commerce can tell you that there are twenty-four Dutchmen in South Carolina, but 201 in North Carolina. I asked him how many there were in Arkansas, and he said, "Exactly eighty."

The State of Michigan harbours the largest number, and their favourite places of residence are, generally

speaking, New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Michigan, Iowa, Wisconsin, or California. These seven states contain 101,919 native Hollanders, with 32,000 more scattered over the remaining forty-one states of the Union. With the help of such specific information it was more fun than counting sheep jumping over a fence—and easier. In Chicago Professor A. Vandenbosch has written and reported everything about the Illinois Dutch, while Aleida J. Pieters has done the same thing for the rest of the Lake region.

A surprise to me was that over 60 per cent. of them are urban—taxi-drivers, waiters, caterers, store clerks, common labourers, university professors, and leaders in high society. Forty per cent. are small-town or rural, but only about 25 per cent. are farmers. In the big cities many of the specialists in banquets and similar functions in banquet halls and hotel ballrooms are Dutchmen. Psychologically the average Dutchman is intelligent, definitely likeable, and frequently a little pig-headed. They are mostly Calvinist Presbyterians, but not necessarily so. Whether this has anything to do with their being a little pig-headed is a problem for theologians and philosophers. A few are Mormon, and publish a weekly of their own called *The Utah Netherlander*. They have eleven Dutch-language publications, all weeklies except the *Missionary Monthly*, which is published in St Louis. Five of the eleven publications are religious.

Professor Barnouw out at Columbia plays a good game of poker, and in a list of his associates in the higher fields of culture and learning there are a couple

of Dutchmen who can take the shirt off your back at seven-card stud with deuces wild.

"The educated Hollander," Professor Barnouw explained to me while raking in most of my blue chips, "adapts himself easily to foreign ways, and his knowledge of the English language, which is taught in all Dutch high schools, facilitates the process of adaptation in America. A great many native Dutchmen are to be found on the faculties of our colleges and universities. The statistics of Netherland exports do not list the scholars whom Holland sends abroad. Bulbs and butter and cheese are of intense interest to the statisticians at The Hague, but they are not concerned with the exportation of scientists and savants. Still, Queen Wilhelmina's country produces a larger number of these than its universities are able to absorb, and since the United States (praised be Congress!) has never erected a tariff barrier against their importation, American institutions of higher learning are gathering the fruits that Holland raised."

"Do they teach you to pass four jacks under the guns in Dutch high schools and then draw one card, pretending you're out on a limb with a four-card flush?" I asked him.

"No," he said, "that merely proves how easily we adapt ourselves to your foreign ways."

Some other outstanding adaptable gentlemen in the fields of higher learning include Dr Jan Schilt, Professor of Astronomy, Columbia University; Dr A. van Maanen, Mount Wilson Observatory; Dr J. A. C.



Fagginger Auer, Professor of Theology, Harvard University; Dr Leunis Van Es, Professor of Animal Pathology, University of Nebraska; Dr J. A. de Haas, Professor of Foreign Trade, Harvard; Dr F. Gideonse, Professor of Economics, University of Chicago; Dr J. G. Dusser de Barenne, Professor of Physiology, Yale University.

Some prominent Dutchmen in the musical world of America are W. van Hoogstraten, conductor of the Portland, Oregon, Symphony; W. van de Wall, music educator and author, pioneer in scientific use of music in social work, New York; Hans Kindler, conductor, Washington, D.C.; C. van Vliet, 'cellist, New York; Willem Willeke, conductor and 'cellist, New York.

Not forgetting the late Edward Bok, and remembering Anthony Airplane Fokker, Hendrik Willem van Loon is possibly the most widely known Dutch American. Before he started writing world-famous best-sellers, talking over the radio, and being invited to tea by Queen Wilhelmina he was a young professor in Cornell University, and afterwards lived in Greenwich Village. He is over six feet tall, weighs more than 250 pounds, worries about his health, though he looks like a rugged giant, plays the guitar and fiddle and a game of chess, which is pretty good, but not as good as he thinks it is. He is probably one of America's few authentically great men in the field of literary scholarship. He has a kind soul and a cantankerous mind comparable to that of Erasmus. Both physically (apart from his size) and mentally he is a sort of super-type synthesis of the traditional great Dutchman.

## V. *Polish Americans*

NONSENSE!" SAID THE TALL, BLUE-EYED, FAIR-HAIRED POLE WHO WORKED IN THE steel-mills at Gary. "The man maybe wants to write the truth about us, and you tell him lies."

"It is the truth," said the short, swarthy, black-haired Pole who raised pigs and melons out on the dunes by Lake Michigan.

"You are both wrong," said the medium-sized Pole of nondescript complexion, who ran the workmen's restaurant on the edge of Chicago where we were drinking tea out of thick glasses.

The fourth Pole, a gigantic priest named something like Father Nieustajacej Zmartwychwstanki, who had brought me there, interrupted with a smile, "Our Lord and Saviour said, 'Wherever two or three are gathered together'—but that was before Poles were invented. Wherever you have three Poles you always have three opinions!"

The tall steel-worker said, "It is true. It is the truest proverb about us. It has held us back. It is our history."

I had been asking them what the real, deep-down racial characteristics of the Poles were, as distinguished from other transplanted race groups which compose modern America. They had agreed that the Poles had a passionate, flaming, fighting love of freedom, but had burst into violent disagreement when the little Pole had

asserted that a love of the land, of the soil, was the deepest thing in the heart of all Poles, and that there wasn't a single Polish factory-worker, coal-miner, labourer, in the United States who didn't dream of some day owning his own farm, either in America, or in Poland, or in the moon.

The tall, blond worker from Gary had shouted that, on the contrary, Poles were natural mechanics, and pulled a newspaper clipping out of his pocket quoting Henry Ford to the effect that "Polish workmen seem to be the cleverest of all foreigners." He had added that in his opinion the dark little Pole, who raised pigs and melons, was crazy.

The little Pole, who was far from dumb, shouted that this was the tragedy of Polish immigration to America—that they had all come looking for land and had got stuck in mills, coal-mines, city slums, factories, industries where they didn't belong.

The priest had added that whether this was true or not, the history of the Poles in Poland lent a certain colour to it. He said that more than 75 per cent. of the total population to-day is and always has been agricultural, and that in his opinion nearly 90 per cent. of all the Poles who had migrated to America since the Civil War came from agricultural stock.

The restaurant-keeper, who was sitting at table with us because it was mid-afternoon and the place nearly empty, disagreed, in his turn, with all the others. He said Poles were "like anybody else," and that it seemed to him that at least half of them around Chicago were "in the grocery business or the stockyards."

"You are all talking nonsense," he repeated: "the Poles work at everything."

We drank a lot more tea, shook hands all round, and parted.

When we got outside I said to Father Zmartwychwstanki, "Look here, maybe I have run into something basic about a large and interesting group of people. Maybe it is true that all or most of the Polish miners and factory-workers dream at night of planting wheat and cabbages."

He said, "I think you have got hold of something. I think it may be true. One way to find out would be to go around asking all factory-workers and miners whether they would prefer to be farmers, but that would take several lifetimes. Another way might be to visit the Polish Consulate, where they have experts who have studied these things—and see what they think about it."

I said, "I know an attractive girl in Chicago here whose Aunt Daisy studied music with Paderewski, and whose family knows everybody high up at the Consulate. I'll get her to take me there and see what we can find out."

"Ho!" said the holy Father. "I see you already know more about the Poles than you pretended."

"Meaning just what, Father?"

"Meaning there's another old Cracow proverb that if you want an important Pole to do you a favour always get a pretty woman to do the asking."

So I got Lemmie Carlisle on the telephone, and she came the next morning in a mink coat, with a big car,

and took me to the magnificent Polish Consulate on Lakeshore Drive. I was introduced to the Consul-General, Dr Wacław Gawronski, who asked after her Aunt Daisy's health, and we met most of the fifteen members of the staff, who unanimously passed the buck, agreeing that the one man in America who could give me the low-down on the interesting if true theory that all the Poles in America were frustrated farmers with a cabbage complex would be a man back East—Peter P. Yolles, editor of *Nowy Świat* (the Polish *Morning World*), published in New York. He had taken a course at Columbia University in social economics, they said, with reference to Polish immigration, and had won his master's degree with a thesis on precisely the kind of stuff that was intriguing me.

They blandly suggested, however, that this was not the time or place to get absorbed in trying to analyse the Polish labourer's soul, since I was now in the second largest Polish city in the entire world—Warsaw being first, Chicago being second, Cracow and Posen coming third and fourth—and that a Polish city, whether in Poland or America, meant lawyers, doctors, merchants, bankers, politicians, pickpockets, journalists, musicians, theatres, churches. I'd find plenty to learn here, they promised, which had little or nothing to do with whether or not mill-workers were frustrated farmers.

A good beginning, they thought, would be for Lemmie and me to go out to lunch now with Dr Jerzy Bojanowski, formerly conductor of the Polish National Opera at Warsaw, now guest conductor from time to

time of the Chicago, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, and other American symphonies.

This Dr Bojanowski, a smooth, cosmopolitan chap, had a big desk in the consulate, and had previously been introduced to me as one of the vice-consuls. Lemmie was all smiles, and as he was helping her into her mink coat I said, "But what are you doing in a consulate?"

"Working," he said with a grin. "I'm working at my regular job right now, when I take you and Miss Carlisle out to lunch—though it will also be a pleasure."

He took us that day to a small, plain, unpretentious restaurant called the Krynica. He introduced us to a blonde young lady in a long white apron who was owner, proprietor, cashier, and cook. Her brother washes the dishes and sweeps out. I stared at her, and wondered whether there was any visual way to recognize a Pole. She might have been pure English, German, North Carolinian, anything. Dr Bojanowski had brought us there because she cooked "in the tradition." We began with *kolduny*, a sort of dumpling filled with chopped meat and steamed, which had been made in the same way, with the same herbs, for five hundred years. (On the same street with this restaurant were drugstores with various Polish-named herbs, dried leaves, and grasses displayed in their windows.) We also had *bigos*—the classic rural dish in Poland—cabbage, sausage, and meat cooked together. Then we had Polish pancakes, very thin, with jelly; and *chruscik*, which is a pastry so delicate in texture that it might be made with rice or almond flour. We gobbled this while we topped off with tea in glasses.

Lemmie and Dr Bojanowski drank some *miod*, made with honey and herbs, highly alcoholic.

"Its chief characteristic," said Dr Bojanowski, "is that it goes to the feet and legs, so that you cannot walk after drinking a few bottles of it, but leaves the brain clear and sparkling. It always makes women more interesting. They remain beautiful, but are no longer dumb."

Lemmie said, "You Poles are a sensual lot, aren't you?"

He said, "I don't know. Are we?"

"My aunt told me so," said Lemmie.

"That's right," I said; "let's talk about Poles. If you don't mind, Dr Bojanowski, I'd like to begin with you. I am puzzled to know what a renowned symphony conductor is doing with a desk job at a consulate."

He told me he'd taken the job at the request of his Government, to promote friendly relations between the two free republics. I thought of the joke about the Polish professor who sat down to write a book about elephants, and when the book came out it was a passionate political treatise entitled *The Elephant with Relation to the Polish Corridor*. They seem to have their own special, a little crazy, brand of flaming devotion to political freedom. They have plenty of national faults, among which the worst seems to be their endless arguments, bickerings, and lack of cohesion among themselves—but I suspect there is some common denominator between Bojanowski's extraordinary private history and the fact that the number of Polish Americans who rushed to volunteer in the

World War was larger than, and completely out of proportion to, that of any other foreign-language American group whatsoever.

Here had been this Bojanowski four years ago approaching the height of his career, already famous throughout Europe, and the idol of Poland's capital. His Government had sent him as a guest conductor to the World's Fair in Chicago; then asked him to remain in America as an *attaché* of the consulate to promote friendship and cultural relations between the two democracies. He had agreed, and there he is, and it seemed a strange, eccentric, almost noble thing, though he cynically tried to discount it by saying, "America is a land to which all good composers, conductors, and artists come if they get a chance."

"Yes," I said. "From your country alone we have Paderewski, Josef Hofmann, Leopold Stokowski of Philadelphia and Hollywood, Rodzinski in Cleveland, Thaddeus Wronski in Detroit, and I don't know how many others—but that isn't exactly the same as your taking the job you did."

He said, "Maybe not, but Paderewski has given more time and energy to promoting world freedom and world democracy than he ever has to composing minuets or pounding a keyboard."

I said, "Is it true of the Poles as a race that they love music more than anything?"

He said, "I don't think so. I don't think the Poles are more devoted to music than other nationalities—not so much, perhaps, as the Italians and Germans. I think you Americans have tagged us with that because



Chopin, who was a Pole, was the first great composer whose pieces were learned by all your grandmothers on the piano; and then, of course, Paderewski came, followed by Hofmann. I think love of the land, of the good earth, is the deepest trait in the soul of the Polack. You know the words 'Polack,' 'Pole,' 'Polski,' mean 'people of the fields,' 'people of the land.'"

"So you agree with the little melon-grower and the priest?"

"Yes, but you'd better look into it more among the Poles in America. Perhaps they have changed in America. When you go among coal-miners, factory-workers, farmers in various parts of the country, you may find a different answer."

Meanwhile I was to be told and shown what urban Poles were like in the largest Polish city outside Poland. I think Bojanowski must have had a pattern in his mind, for the next night he took us to dinner at the largest Polish restaurant in Chicago, Lenards, out on Milwaukee Avenue in the centre of a prosperous Polish district, with an orchestra, dance-floor, hundreds of diners, drinkers, dancers, nearly all Polish. Its walls were covered with oil paintings and frescoes which constituted a history of the Poles in America since earliest colonial days. We viewed them all before dining. There was Pulaski, of course, companion of George Washington, who helped win the battle of Brandywine, gave his large fortune to the cause of American liberty, and afterwards his life. (He was killed in the battle of Savannah when he was thirty-one years old.) There was Kosciusko, great friend of

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Thomas Jefferson, who planned the fortifications at Saratoga; won the victory over the French; chose the site at West Point; founded the school for freed Negro slaves at Newark. Kosciusko is called, both in America and in Poland, "the hero of freedom." I had learned about these Polish-American heroes at school, but stared in some amazement at a portrait of Jan of Kolno, a Polish adventurer who came to America in 1475, twenty years before Columbus. He landed in Labrador, but cruised down the coast as far as Delaware.<sup>1</sup> The two largest pictures were those of Marshal

<sup>1</sup> Kolno left no more practical traces than Leif Ericsson. The first Poles who went to America and remained were a group who settled in Jamestown under Captain John Smith. They were skilled workers in tar, glass, and soap. In 1619, according to Captain Smith, they organized the first strike on record in the history of America. The strike was called to compel the English members of the community to recognize them as equals. This was necessary, as the Poles had been brought over by English gentlemen of the leisure class to serve as mechanics and workers—and they soon found themselves looked upon as little better than servants. The strike was successful, and the town council issued a proclamation declaring equal rights for the Poles. Captain Smith says of these earliest Poles, "They and the Dutchmen were the only ones who knew what work was!" In these earliest colonial days there came also a few highly educated members of the cultured class, who settled mostly in New Amsterdam. Around 1735, however, one intrepid Pole ventured so far west as Ohio and founded the trading post of Sandusky, the city which now bears his name. The second group of immigrants, incidentally quite large, came for the express purpose of fighting against the British in the American Revolution. They were educated, upper-class Poles, and many of them held high positions in the armies. The names of Pulaski, Kosciusko, Zabriskie, are a part of American history. The third immigration was a political immigration occurring after the dismemberment of Poland. It began in 1797, and reached its peak in 1830. This, too, was an immigration of men of letters, scientists, etc. The fourth immigration was the economic immigration which started with a group of a hundred families who went to Texas in 1854 headed by Father Leopold Moczygeba. They were peasant farmers. However, the mass immigration did not really get under way until 1880.

Pilsudski, who saved Warsaw from the Russians, and Woodrow Wilson, whose "thirteenth point" was the freedom of Poland. Alongside dead Jean de Reszke and Modjeska were portraits of living Paderewski, Hofmann, and Stokowski. I said to my new friend, "Your picture may hang there some day."

He said, "Maybe, but I'd rather dance with Lemmie than hang on the wall."

So we dined, and he danced with Lemmie to an American jazz tune, but afterwards he had the orchestra play Polish mazurkas, and later took us to the largest Polish theatre in Chicago to see a play called *Sluby Panienskie*, presented by the Polish Stage Society. The title meant *The Maiden's Vow*. It was a classic written by a Count Aleksander Fredro, and reminded me of Chekhov. It was costume stuff with wigs and eighteenth-century hoop skirts. The leading male rôle was played by Kazimierz Majewski, part owner of *Zgoda*, a big Polish daily, on which he is cartoonist. One of the leading female rôles was played by his pretty daughter. Between acts Bojanowski was invited to make a little speech from the stage, and afterwards we were introduced to some of the principals.

The one who interested me most was Mr Majewski. His cartooning appears in the *Daily Zgoda*, said to

These masses settled progressively in New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Ohio. Of these vast groups Dr McCracken, President of Vassar, says, "Whenever a Polish farmer wants to borrow money he is never asked for collateral." Those of this peasant class who went into the factories in the towns constituted, and even now constitute, the only group of Poles with whom there are problems of a social nature. The Polish peasant is naturally unsophisticated, and finds the problem of adjustment to city life difficult.

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have the largest circulation of all foreign-language newspapers in the United States. Majewski is tall, sandy, clean-shaven, no longer young. He reminded me of an Edinburgh Scotsman. He is violently Democratic, and a violent cartoonist. His cartoons use all the conventional menagerie of elephants, donkeys, Al Smith's brown Derby, Pierpont Morgan's silk hat, and all the caricatured faces of America's leading financiers and political gladiators. But all the balloons and captions are in Polish.

The next biggest Polish-language newspaper in Chicago is the *Diennik Chicagowski* (*Chicago Daily News*), printed all in Polish except for a slogan saying, "Loyalty to the U.S.A."

The outstanding Polish journalist of Chicago, however, doesn't work in the Polish language at all. He is Anthony Czarnecki, of the *Chicago Daily News*. His nickname is "Tony Dynamite," and he is a 100 per cent., two-fisted American. There are more than a hundred Polish publications in the United States, of which eleven are metropolitan dailies; there are also a number of Polish-American publications in English.

Two Chicago friends of Bojanowski, whom we went another day to see, Frank Milanowski and Isabelle Izdebski, publish a smooth-paper monthly digest of Polish-American life and culture. It is human rather than highbrow. Its leading editorials in issues they showed me dealt respectively with Poles in American football, Pola Negri, Stanislaw Szukalski, who came to Chicago in 1913, and is now a savage, internationally famous sculptor. Another reminiscent article told of

how Henryk Sienkiewicz, author of *Quo Vadis?* was once a resident of California, as American correspondent of a Warsaw newspaper.

A queer journalistic detail which I'd never have known except for Miss Izdebski is that a couple of Americans named Egerton Sykes and Cecelia Halpern publish an English-language newspaper in Warsaw. She had copies on her desk. The five biggest theatres in Poland's capital were just then advertising Norma Shearer in *Romeo and Juliet*; Shirley Temple in one of her latest; Clark Gable in *San Francisco*, the late Jean Harlow running neck and neck with a Polish star who was playing Barbara Radziwillowna; and at the Warsaw Rialto William Powell and Myrna Loy.

In Chicago there are five movie theatres owned by Poles, but only one of these runs Polish pictures. It is the Chopin, at the corner of Division and Milwaukee. There are several Polish radio hours on the Chicago network, but they have no station of their own.

I gradually discovered that it was impossible for me or any other reporter to see with the naked eye, as it were, this second-largest Polish city in the world, which is named Chicago. There are, for instance, more than fifty important Polish-American institutions and organizations in Chicago, apart from their churches and schools, and at least a dozen of them, including the Polish National Alliance, the Polish Women's Alliance, the Polish Army Veterans' Association, St Mary's Hospital, the Polish Alma Mater, the Polish Roman Catholic Union, are housed in important buildings which they own—but they don't stick out like a

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panorama, because they are scattered all over Greater Chicago. There are business-men's associations, commercial clubs, teachers' clubs, art clubs, library societies, singing societies, legal, medical, and dental societies, engineers' clubs, but, while they call themselves Polish American and are proud of their Polish ancestry, they are so interwoven and interspersed that the Polish city of Chicago becomes part of the blood and bone and soul of the American city of Chicago. There are, of course, settlements and districts predominantly Polish, like those around Pulaski Hall, Slowacki Hall, and Mickiewicz Hall, but the half-million Poles who comprise the total are distributed through that windy metropolis like pieces of a kidney in a beefsteak pie, from skyscraper offices and the Social Register to slums on the edge of the stockyard and sinks where they wash dishes in the basements of the big American hotels.

Another reason you can't see this half-million Poles with the eyes in your head is that when you do get a thousand of them together, as I saw them sometimes during the next few weeks, in theatres, shops, factories, churches, crowds, they look like anybody else. They look like your brother Charlie, or my aunt from Hawkinsville, Georgia. I can perhaps recognize a thousand Jews or a thousand Chinamen, though I might get mixed up if some of them respectively were Portuguese or Hawaiians; and I think some of us might be able to recognize a thousand Greeks, or Italians, or maybe even Irishmen—but I defy anybody to recognize a thousand Poles. They are tall, short, fat, lean, fair-haired, dark, red-headed. They simply look like

people. Benda, who is famous for doing masks which are supposed to idealize the Polish face, says there isn't any such thing as a Polish face, unless you mean a hollow-cheeked Carpathian mountaineer with blond moustaches like the handlebars of an old-fashioned bicycle, or a Slav with high cheek-bones—due to Tartars in his ancestry. After meeting about a thousand Polish Americans personally, and seeing about a million of them in assemblages anywhere from the Kosciuszko Foundation ball in the Waldorf Astoria to the bottom of a coal-mine near Wilkes-Barre, I remain in bewildered agreement with Benda. I used to think a beautiful Slav meant a gal with high cheek-bones, slant eyes, and smooth, dark hair. But it isn't necessarily so. A beautiful Slav can be any size, shape, or colour. And so can a Polish coal-miner or farmer, and so are the half-million Poles in Chicago.

Another reason you can't put salt on their tails is that they don't seem to specialize in any particular trades or professions. There are ten Polish judges in Chicago, including County Judge Edmund Jarecki; Chief Justice of the Criminal Court John Prystalski; Judge of the Municipal Court Peter Schwaba; a couple of Congressmen named L. Shuetz and L. Kocialkowski; there are about three hundred Polish-American doctors and dentists, of whom the most famous is Dr Casimir Zurawski; others are Drs Dombrowski, Czaya, Parylski, Tylman, who are respectively Superintendents of the Chicago State Hospital, the Municipal Tuberculosis Sanatorium, the Hospital for Eye, Ear, Nose, and Throat, and President of the Chicago Dental

Association. These are purely American institutions, not Polish-American.

A few more of these half-million Chicago Poles are M. Szymczak, Director of the Federal Reserve board, who was formerly comptroller of the city of Chicago; Julius Smietanka, who has been Chairman of the Chicago Board of Education, president of two banks, internal-revenue collector. Add to these some Poles serving sentences for various crimes in the Chicago Penitentiary, a few convicted pickpockets and burglars; Mr and Mrs Adam Kulikowski, who own and publish *Opportunity*; Colonel Barzynski, of the U.S. Army; Stanley Chylinski, Professor of Chemistry at the University of Chicago, and Felix Borowski, composer and conductor, who was called East to the Philharmonic for a series of concerts in Carnegie Hall a winter or two ago. Add to this the fact that my workmen's restaurant proprietor told me it seemed to him that all the Poles in Chicago "were grocers," and that somebody else told me nearly all of them worked in the stockyards, and that the late Congressman Zionchek, who went berserk on the White House lawn, was a Polish American. His name means "hare-brained" or "little rabbit." Shake all this in a cocktail and pour it out in a Melting Pot punch-bowl draped with the American flag, and drink a lot of it as I did, figuratively speaking, and I think you'll agree with me that the half-million Poles in Chicago are just about the same sort of people, doing just the same sort of thing, as the half-million Americans in Atlanta, Georgia. They may be a little more thrifty than most. Figures often lie, but Chicago figures



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seem to show that 80 per cent. of the Polish families, high and low, owned their own houses at the beginning of the depression, and generally still own them to-day. They suffered, as everybody did, but managed to hang on. A guess by non-Polish experts at City Hall was that they own about 400,000,000 dollars' worth of real estate in Chicago.<sup>1</sup>

A brass plate on an old New York brownstone mansion at 149 East 67th Street reads :

KONSULAT GENERALNY  
RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ POLSKIEJ  
W NEW-YORK'U

Inside it, amid oil paintings which glowed in palatial gloom, but to the staccato of typewriters and telephones, Consul Juliusz Szygowski presented me to Consul-General Sylvester Gruszka, introduced me to a number of gentlemen of the staff, none of whom looked any different from Americans, Swedes, Englishmen, or Sicilians, and presently turned me over to Mr John A. Wasilewski, in charge of the immigration department, who turned out to be my long-lost brother, so to speak,

<sup>1</sup> Most of the five million Polish Americans and their first-generation descendants now live in the region of the Great Lakes, lower New England, New York, and the Pennsylvania-West Virginia coal region. Greater New York has about a quarter of a million. The Milwaukee colony is one of the oldest, publishes two big dailies, the *Polish Daily Courier* and *Polish Daily News*; has numerous members of the State Legislature, and includes holders of important city, country, and state offices. Dean Siztlik, of the law department of the university, is head of the Polish National Alliance. Detroit also has two big dailies, the *Polish Daily News*, *The People's Voice*, and one weekly called *Ognisko Domowe*. Outstanding Poles include Vice-Governor Joseph Nowicki; State Commissioner Koscinski; Congressmen Sadowski, Dingell, and Lesinski. Most of the workers are employed in the automobile industry.

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and whom I soon nicknamed "Virgil," because he did for me in Manhattan what Virgil had done in hell for a reporter named Dante. He first took me up to the top of the same building to meet Dr Stephen Mizwa, head of the Kosciusko Foundation, who nests there among millions of books, promoting cultural and intellectual relationships between Poland and America, exchanging students, scholars, and professors between universities, and enjoying himself thoroughly. He is a baldish, agreeable, smooth-skinned gentleman, dynamic, who came to America as an immigrant boy at the age of seventeen, and put himself through Amherst and Harvard. He was then offered a professorship at Drake University, and one of the big national magazines wrote him up in a piece entitled *From Steerage to College Chair in Eleven Years*.

Dr Mizwa agreed that if I wanted to find out whether all industrial Poles were frustrated cabbage-growers, the man to see would be Peter Yolles, editor of *Nowy Swiat*, so Virgil and I headed down towards 380 Second Avenue, smoking cigarettes in a taxicab. It was a busy

One Detroit suburb, Hamtramck, Michigan, has more than 80,000 Poles, 80 per cent. of the population. It is governed mostly by officials of Polish extraction. Its present mayor is Dr Tenerowicz. A majority of its Board of Aldermen are Poles. Its public schools, controlled also by Poles, are regarded as models of American efficiency. Cleveland, with its comparatively smaller population, has two big dailies also, the *Monitor* and the *Daily News*, and the Poles there in recent years are beginning to participate to a more marked degree than in the past in city, state, and national politics. Buffalo has three distinct immense Polish sections, but only one big daily, appropriately named *Polish Everybody's Daily*. Outstanding Poles include Dr Fronczak, for many years Commissioner of Health; State Senator Wojtkowiak; a number of city and county officials; and numerous big merchants.

metropolitan daily, and Peter Yolles was my meat. He had studied the theme-song in question, and had written pieces about it.

"It is as true," he said, "as any generality can be. Next to his proverbial political cantankerousness and love of liberty the outstanding characteristic of the typical Pole is love of the soil—of the land. When he comes here he has two ideals which are so tied together that it takes him a long time to disentangle them. One is to buy land here and become a farmer. The other is to return to Poland and buy land. Industrial employers will tell you that the Poles are good workers, and so they are, but they dream at night of growing potatoes and cabbages. I believe this is the principal reason they put more money in savings banks than other foreign-language groups. When our peasant immigration was reaching its peak, from the nineties to the World War, neither our own Polish-American institutions nor the American Government had devised machinery or organized movements to distribute them over the land—to help put the Pole on the farm. They got stuck in congested areas, factory and industrial centres, in crowded tenements and slums, and were less fitted for it perhaps than any other immigrant group, because they had practically all come from agricultural villages and farms. In many cases the women broke down, and the children went bad. That they were good peasant stock is proved by the fact that less than 1 per cent. of Polish crime in America is attributable to Poles who came here from Poland, but, on the sad contrary, the juvenile-delinquency record for Polish children born in

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American slums is higher than that of other nationalities. Too many children—not all of them, of course—degenerated. I don't mean they became murderers, dangerous criminals. No generation of Poles has been a criminal element in that sense. But the juvenile-delinquency record, larceny, petty misdemeanours of all sorts, was bad for a while. All good Polish Americans are ashamed of it. We are ashamed that we couldn't do something about it before the children were born. The American Government, and also many Polish-American organizations, are now awakened to this and are helping. Our own paper here has a social-welfare department, and devotes a lot of space regularly to the Big Brother Movement.

“A paradox was that the depression *helped* a lot of Poles. It helped them get out of restricted areas on to farms, particularly in New England, around New York, and on Long Island. The way it worked was that the native American farmer—and small blame to him!—had become accustomed to a high standard of living, had a car, radio, telephone, etc. He was a main sufferer from depression, and in many cases gave up his farm rather than reduce his standard of living. Hard-working Poles, accustomed to less high standards, bought farms cheap on small down-payments during the depression, worked harder, and suffered more hardships than the traditional American farmer cared to endure—and are slowly paying off their mortgages. The mass Polish population in America is moving slowly to the farms, where it should have been from the beginning.”

I had been listening with profound attention.

realizing that I was learning more than I might by weeks or months of personal observation in a new field. What I had been hearing was a mouthful, and I am glad to be able to put it in the mouth of a Pole who, the Poles themselves say, is a deeply intelligent man, as well as a good man—a good Pole and a good American.

On down Second Avenue we went, turning east at St Mark's Place, into the heart of Polish-American New York. This is a continuation of East Eighth Street, spotted with butchers, bakers, tailors, photographers, whose names end in "iuk" or "ski" and whose signs are in Polish, spilling down the avenues where it mixes with Russian, Jewish, and Italian, into Seventh Street, which is predominantly Polish again with St Stanislaus Parish House and church. The most frequent phenomena were delicatessen stores featuring Warsaw ham, but the outstanding phenomenon was a high brick hall, almost flush with the pavement, but with basement entrances and tall stairway, covered with signs both Polish and English. It was called Arlington Hall. It was also called, in immense letters, "Polish National Home in the City of New York, Inc." It was called a lot of other names in Polish. It was also a restaurant, said Virgil, where we would presently eat.

"Warsaw ham?" I asked.

"Sure," said Virgil, "but that reminds me—I want you to meet a butcher friend of mine."

We went to a place on First Avenue whose front looked like any prosperous delicatessen, but out of a big office in the rear Virgil pulled an aproned buddy named Stasiuk, boss-owner of the place, who took us

through labyrinths of concrete floor, white tile, ice-pipes, steam-pipes, smoke-rooms that looked like furnaces of transatlantic liners. Friend Stasiuk was born a peasant in Lemberg, came steerage twenty years ago with forty-two dollars in his pocket, and is now a meat baron, though he still wears a sausage-smeared apron. He has establishments also in Brooklyn and Greenpoint, and can do anything with a pig except make Polish ham out of it. He sliced some imported ham to teach me why it was different from all the other hams on earth. Its difference seemed to be in tenderness and extreme delicacy of flavour.

This whetted all our appetites, so we went over to the basement of Arlington Hall for lunch. At one table some Polish journalists were quarrelling violently over politics, yet laughed and invited us to join them. The Pole is a quarrelsome fellow, politically rather than personally. Virgil shouted something to them in Polish and said to me, "You know, back home in Poland we had thirty-eight parties in Parliament. And at a land-owners' convention when 999 farmers said 'Yes' and one farmer said 'No,' they stayed in session all summer to argue about it!"

At another table were two pretty Polish girls (with high cheek-bones for once), and I regret to report that Virgil was soon making eyes at them, though he was old enough to know better. The Poles, in their quiet way, are quite interested in sex, but with less *frou-frou* than the French, though they are sometimes compared to them. At our own table presently were gathered Kazimierz Jarzebowski, Polish broadcasting impresario

who puts on programmes over WBNX; a gay gentleman from Broadway engaged in an American big business, named Frank Oleksinski; and a bottle of Polish whisky with a long piece of green grass in it. This aromatic grass, they told me, grew only in Eastern Poland and was called *zubrowka*. I tasted a little of it, and it tasted—like whisky flavoured with green grass.

While a waiter with long moustaches was bringing Warsaw ham, Cracow "baloney," and meat-balls covered with black gravy, the whisky made me think of how difficult Polish names are for Americans, and of how we always called Dr Hrdlicka, of the Smithsonian Institution, Professor Hardlicker.

Our radio guest, Jarzebowski, said, "It's pronounced Hoardlitchka, and he's really a Czech, though people generally imagine it's a Polish name. It gets into the newspaper headlines often, doesn't it?"

Virgil interrupted, "And when I introduced my Polish *fiancée* to my American friends they nicknamed her Miss Bottle-o'-whisky, because her name was Barto-zynski."

I said, "It's when Polish names and words have solid chunks of consonants with few vowels that we get really stuck."

Virgil said, "But Polish isn't half as bad about that as your own English language."

"What do you mean?" I said. "We never have anything like *hrdl* unseparated by any vowel at all."

"No," said Virgil, "you have worse. Let's go back to the whisky a minute. You see several bottles over

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there on the shelf, They are all probably of different strengths."

"What in hell has that got to do with it?" I said.

"It's got *ngths* to do with it," said Virgil. "'Strengths' has nine letters and only one vowel, and it's a common word. I can think of plenty in your language but very few in mine as bad as that."

"Everything," said one of the journalists, "is in custom and familiarity. You Americans still think it's funny for names to end in *ski*, despite your respect for names like Ossendowski, Paderewski, and Stokowski."

Virgil said, "I'm not sure I agree about that. It occurred to me when I was a child, and didn't know any other language but Polish, that *ski*, if you repeat it enough, is a funny syllable—a naturally funny sound, humorous in any language."

He pulled out of his wallet a card which he had received from a gentleman in Detroit. It read:

ARTHUR A. KOSCINSKI *and* ROBERT J. WOJCINSKI

ANNOUNCE THAT

JOHN KAMINSKI *and* JOHN J. POLESKI

HAVE BECOME ASSOCIATED WITH THE FIRM OF

KOSCINSKI AND WOJCINSKI

IN THE GENERAL PRACTICE OF LAW, AND THAT COMMENCING

JANUARY 1ST, 1937, THE FIRM NAME WILL BE

KOSCINSKI, KAMINSKI, POLESKI & WOJCINSKI

WITH OFFICES AT

3115 BARLUM TOWER

Cherry 4055

DETROIT

They all agreed it was funny, but the discussion had set Virgil Wasilewski to thinking about another angle



of it. "Things have changed now," said he, "but when I came to America twenty years ago names that ended like mine were still a handicap. What we've been saying here is among friends who tease each other, but in the winter of 1916 I went to the Biltmore and gave my name and wanted to see the manager about arranging a banquet. His secretary lifted her eyebrows doubtfully and said, "*What* did you say your name was? How do you spell it?" When I finally saw the frock-coated manager he was brusque and a little offensive, and I had to preach him a profane sermon mentioning Pulaski and Paderewski. 'What did you say your own name was?' I asked him in parting. He said, 'Smith,' and I said, 'How do you spell it?'"

A quality Mr Jarzebowski thought Poles had in common with Americans was love of absurd fantasy, pure nonsense. He told about a Pole who had said he couldn't understand wireless telegraphy and the radio. Another Pole explained it to him. He said, "You know how the ordinary telegraph line works, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, you know it's like a long dog with its head in Warsaw and its tail in Cracow. You pinch its tail in Cracow and it barks in Warsaw."

"So what?"

"Well, wireless is exactly the same without the dog."

They have as many Jewish jokes as Americans do, and, as with Americans, it's generally the Jews themselves who tell the best ones. A Polish-Jewish journalist who had come over from an adjoining table told us this one:

The Jew and the Polish general were riding in the same *wagon-lit* compartment, and both were so bored that they got to talking with each other. The general said, "Let's pass the time asking riddles. We'll bet fifty lei on the answers. For every one I can't guess I'll pay you fifty lei, and for every one you can't answer you'll pay me fifty lei." The Jew said, "It wouldn't be fair, because you're an educated man and I'm not." The general said, "All right, we'll change the odds to make it fair. I'll pay you fifty for those I can't guess, and you will pay me only twenty-five." The Jew thought awhile, and asked, "What is it that has two legs when it is flying and three legs when it is on the ground?"

The general thought for a long time and finally gave up. "I don't know," he said; "here's your fifty lei. What's the answer?"

"I don't know either," said the Jew; "here's your twenty-five."

I asked Mr Jarzebowski about broadcasts in Polish. He told me they have no stations of their own, but have Polish hours every day over WBNX, WHOM, and WAAT. After luncheon they showed me through the building. "Polish National Home," vaguely suggesting a charitable institution of some sort, is a misnomer. It is more like a club centre, with a big ballroom, theatre, assembly-rooms, bar—a sort of political and social club, with a public restaurant in the basement.

More than 30,000 Poles work in various industrial plants round the Greater New York area, and Ladislaus Robaczynski, whom I visited next day, over on

Long Island, is a shining example of what *one* immigrant may do for America. His father was a forester in Poland, and brought Ladislaus over in the steerage when the boy was ten. The kid had a hankering for machinery, and after going through the ordinary public schools in Brooklyn he began studying mechanical engineering—by mail—with the International Correspondence School, like any ambitious American boy without much money who reads the advertisements. He said to me with a grin, "When you come here at the age I came you are about the same as born here." He has never yet been to a polytechnic school or a big university. He just sat at home and studied stuff he got by mail and bought a few rattail files and a couple of drills and other gadgets. He must have been born a mechanical genius, for he invented and now builds knitting-machines bigger than automobiles and more complicated than linotypes which have got the entire world beat, doing flat and purl stitch, double and triple head borders, and tubing borders, whatever that may mean. Before this young steerage immigrant came to America and turned out to be a mechanical genius all the knitting-machines which did this kind of work in American mills had to be imported from Switzerland and Germany. To-day all machines of this sort used throughout the United States are made in America, supplying employment to Americans in America, keeping the money, profits, and prestige in the United States. To top it, these American machines are not only now used in British mills, but have supplanted the old-type machines in Germany and Switzerland.

Friend Robaczynski is happy as well as rich, is the grandfather of several American babies, and regards himself as American, too. He is proud of his Polish ancestry, but returns to Poland now only occasionally, as an American tourist.

When he took me through his shops there were only two things which made me think of Poland. There were some fine hounds there, and also one beautiful bitch which had just pupped under one of the less noisy machines. They made me remember that Ladislaus's father had been a forester, and I'll bet there isn't another big industrial machine-shop in America which harbours hounds. Imagine finding a litter of coon-dogs under one of the big machines in Henry Ford's factory!

The other foreign touch in this shop was a proverb the boss quoted when I skidded near a machine which was making needle-grooves in a flat, shining piece of steel like a piano sounding-board, bathed in oil which splattered on the floor. He smiled as I recaptured my equilibrium, and said, "A horse has four legs, and still *he* slips." I don't think that exists among English or American aphorisms. It was not a Polish shop in the sense that it employs Poles exclusively. Various Poles work in it, but Ladislaus employs *American* machinists. He doesn't care what their racial origin is so long as they are good machinists. A thing which is, however, perhaps traditionally European is that his son, Ladislaus Junior, and his son-in-law work in the shops, and that he expects them and their babies to inherit it.

I said, "Suppose the youngest baby wants to be a violinist?"

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He said, "I will try to stop him, but if he wants to badly enough he will do it anyway. My father tried to make me a forester."<sup>1</sup>

A reunion of Poles adjacent to New York, across the other river, in New Jersey, was held for me another morning, on Springfield Avenue, in Newark, by Thomas Wyglendowski, whose ancestors had been cabinet-makers in Poland. He came to America with some family savings, and now owns one of the biggest furniture stores in the metropolitan area. He goes back to Poland often, is interested in art, and the walls of the store were hung with oil paintings (reminding me of Russian murals) of Polish farmers, mountaineers, and

<sup>1</sup> Individual Polish Americans whom Americans have almost forgotten to think of as Poles are scattered all over the map. Ralph Modjeski, son of the great dead actress, who spelled her name with an "a," has built bridges across the St Lawrence at Montreal, the Hudson in New York, the Golden Gate in San Francisco, and is one of the most famous bridge engineers of the Western Hemisphere; Professor Felix Pawlowski led the world in aeronautical education at the University of Michigan; Helena Rubinstein is one of the world's outstanding beauty experts; W. T. Benda, born in Poland, but who considers himself to be thoroughly American, is called by the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, always sparing of praise towards Americans, the world's greatest maker of masks and its greatest authority on masks. Out in Hollywood Paul Muni is a Pole, and Richard Boleslawski, who died in 1937 after completing *The Garden of Allah* and working on *The Last of Mrs Cheyney*. Other famous Poles out there are Pola Negri, Gilda Gray, and Adam Didur, who was a famous Metropolitan *basso* before he went in for the movies. Columbia University alone has sixty-eight Polish professors, and others have nearly as many. The dean of the law school at Marquette University, in Milwaukee, is Dr F. S. Swietlik, and Dr M. S. Szymczak, who went to Washington as a member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, was once Professor of Economics at De Pauw. In the field of sport the Poles have taken to football and baseball like ducks to water. One year nearly the whole Notre Dame team was composed of Poles, but continued to be known as "the fighting Irish." In

artisans, in Polish costume, enormous moustaches, with three-stringed fiddles, bright-coloured vests, feathers in their hats, fantastic to my eyes and foreign, while the Polish Americans I talked with there in flesh and blood, only a couple of generations removed, were undistinguishable from any other Americans. If you passed the store the only thing that would make you guess it was Polish was a big painting of Marshal Pilsudski in one of the big show-windows. This painting had taken first prize in an art exhibit in Warsaw, and here it was now, in Newark, New Jersey. The son, Casimir, a young American business-man recently married to a blonde young lady of Polish origin whom you couldn't distinguish racially from any other pretty American blonde on Fifth Avenue, helps his father run the business. Among the friends they had invited to the store to meet me was a priest who shook hands with Casimir, and said, "Congratulations."

I said, "Is that about your recent marriage?"

baseball Poles include Szymanski (Simmons) and Jablonowski, Washington Senators; Pietruszka (Piet), Detroit Tigers; Rosenthal, Chicago White Sox; Glenn, New York Yankees; Bejma, St Louis Browns; Urbanski, Boston Bees; Kowalik, Phillies; and Ogrodowski and Ryba, St Louis Cardinals. In football they include Wojciechowicz, Fordham University; Jankowski, Wisconsin University; Gotzsiewski, Wisconsin University; Macewicz, Holy Cross, Massachusetts; Nowogrowski, Wiatrak, Waskowicz, Mondala, and Sliwinski, Washington University. The famous Bronko Nagurski, now a professional with the Chicago Bears, is a Pole. In skiing Kotlarck of Duluth was champion in 1935 and second in 1937. Names are a handicap in two ways, when checking up on distinguished Polish Americans. They are hell to spell when they keep their own names, and the second way is that Miss Stella Walsh, who held the world record for a while for 100 metres, is Polish; and so is Weiss, the discus-thrower who beat the Olympic record in 1932. But "a rose by any other name is still a Pole," as Shakespeare said.

He said, "No, this is my Saint's Day—St Casimir's Day. We have our birthdays on our Saint's days instead of the day we were actually born."

They introduced me to a lot of Poles in various businesses, all Americans now, and to George Przymusinski, editor of *Kronika*, the leading New Jersey Polish newspaper and official organ of some thirty Polish organizations in the region. He was bright, quite small, dark-haired, rough-skinned. My host, Wyglendowski Senior, was large, suave, smooth, and blondish. The Poles, I repeat, are one race I don't believe can be distinguished by size, shape, cranial formation, or complexion from any other Aryan race whatsoever—except for the occasional ones (sometimes mistaken for typical, but really not very frequent) who have Tartar blood and consequently high cheek-bones.

Casimir and his father took the little editor and me home to lunch, to a house elaborately furnished in Victorian style, including heavy carved furniture, stuffed alligators, and a large shellacked turtle, where we met Mrs Wyglendowski, whose duties as vice-president of the furniture company did not prevent her from bustling in and out of the kitchen to superintend the cooking, which was being done by a little Polish immigrant girl who doesn't speak English yet, and is afraid to go to church or buy a dress unless Mrs Wyglendowski goes with her. She was all frightened smiles, and more like a poor relation in the house than a hired servant. We began with smoked herring and Warsaw ham, which melted in the mouth, on tiny pieces of fresh rye bread. These were called *kanapki*, and I

learned that *canape*, which you see printed on fashionable menus these days, is a Polish word, instead of French, as I had always supposed. The main dish looked like Hamburgers, but had other meats ground up in it along with the beef, and was covered with spicy sauce. Since it was Casimir's Saint's Day, Mrs Wyglendowski had made him a pie whose filling looked and tasted like lemon meringue, but whose crust, though pastry, was thick and sweet, like cake. She said sweetened pastry was characteristically Polish. She sent to the kitchen for some left-over apple cake called *Szarlotka*. It did not taste like German apple cake. Its dough was short and flaky as fine French pastry, but sweet and thick. At the end of the meal we all had tea with lemon in tall glasses.

After luncheon Mrs Wyglendowski showed me an album with pictures of herself and her husband at the captain's table aboard the *Batory* on their last trip to Poland, and I guess that got her started thinking sentimentally about navigation in general, for she told me that on the day of St John the Baptist right there in New Jersey they still put candles on little rafts with wreaths of flowers and light the candles and set them afloat at night on the river. I thanked her and thought it was beautiful.

George Przymusinski, not to be outdone in volunteering items that might interest a non-Polish American, said, "And I bet you didn't know that André Kostelanetz is a Pole too. His name is really spelled Kasztelaniec."

Driving back from Newark to New York along the



Pulaski skyway, you see some monstrous tall chimneys, a power-house, and white buildings, mostly glass, which look like the biggest laundry in the world—and the three young Polish immigrants Sieminski who changed their first names to Henry, William, and Stanley and started it some twenty years ago on twenty-eight dollars and a shoe-string, say it is actually the largest single laundry unit in the world.

A week later I was among the coal-miners.

In the bright mid-afternoon sunshine of a clean town like any other, except that its name was Nanticoke, men, mostly blue-eyed, but with their faces black like burned-cork minstrels, were mingling with the ordinary crowd, gossiping with smartly dressed girls, going in and out of stores with plate-glass windows. They wore steel helmets, which reminded me of war, except that they were shaped like caps, with visors. Most of them carried tin lunch-boxes. I stared because I had never been in a modern anthracite mining town.

"Three out of every five you see are Poles," said Father Kasaczun. I was with a Roman Catholic priest again for guide and friend, just as in Chicago. It didn't mean I was turning clerical, or getting a church angle. It meant, as I had found out elsewhere on the map, that 95 per cent. of all the Poles in America are Roman Catholic parishioners, and that priests are the natural guides among them. Furthermore, this particular priest's father had been a pick-and-shovel miner.

I said, "Let's go home with some of them. Let's go home with some of them right now." He said, "I know

them all. You pick one out, and we'll go home with him."

I picked a man of medium size, medium age, blue eyes, face blacker than a cake-walking nigger's. "We go home with you, Sigismund," said Father Kasaczun, introducing me to the miner, whose last name was Zakrzewski, and who grinned through his grime. "You wait till I clean up," said Sigismund. "No, my friend wants to see you clean up."

We went to a two-story double house on Main Street, in Sugar Notch, newly painted, with a nice front porch. But we didn't go up on the porch. We went round to the back, where a vegetable garden was struggling, into a cement basement with an old-fashioned wooden washtub and a faucet. Sigismund called his wife, stripped himself to the waist, bent over the tub. She poured buckets of water over his head while he soaped himself; then she scrubbed his back. The grime came off amazingly easy, and floated on the water's surface. She went away, while he took off his pants, finished the job, dressed, and we went upstairs. He owned his little house. It had good furniture, plush sofas, fancy lamps, radio in the parlour; electric ice-box, porcelain coal-burning range, and other modern gadgets in the kitchen. On the parlour wall Christs, Madonnas, President Roosevelt, and a framed motto with religious symbols and bright-coloured lettering which said, "Boze bogoslaw naszemu domowi" (God bless our home) to you. The elderly wife, beaming, since I was there with the family priest, showed us over the house, and upstairs was a fine, clean, modern bathroom, white tub and all!

"Why you make him wash in the cellar?" I asked.

"You saw why," she said: "sometimes he takes a shower first in the company baths at the mines, and then I let him come straight up here."

As we thanked them and took our departure Father Kasaczun said, "You happened to pick an expert contract miner who works regularly, gets ten dollars a day for a supposed eight-hour day, but often has his cars loaded and is out in five and a half or six hours. We'd better visit some now who are not so well off."

We went to the house of a company miner, who was lucky if he worked two or three days a week, and got less than six dollars a day, sometimes considerably less. He lived in a company house. The place was clean, but bare and poor. The only similarity with the prosperous miner's house was that there were religious pictures on the wall.

"Between these extremes," said Father Kasaczun, "they are all pretty well housed now, as well as most other industrial workers, but it wasn't like that twenty years ago. Up to the World War it was pretty awful. They lived in rows of crowded shacks, and the only water was one outside faucet to every dozen houses. The wife, often carrying a baby, would have to lug the water home, and sometimes there would be five people sleeping in one room. It was stupid and awful. It has changed now, as you see."

"But I didn't understand," I said, "about contract miner and company miner." He explained what a contract miner was—simply a man who did piece work, while a company miner is one who works for wages at

so much per day. Both work for the same companies. Contract miners generally are more expert and get the best money, but by no means always. Some of the best experts are company miners, and a company expert, working in rock on a bad vein, may send out almost no coal on a given day, yet make more money than a contract expert who has loaded five cars.

The Poles, said Father Kasaczun, came piling in there around 1910, found Welsh, English, Irish, in the mines. They felt strange, couldn't speak English, were resented and abused. They were more abused by fellow-miners than by the employers. Now in many mines Poles are in the majority, speak English, and hold their own. It would be a lie to say that the Poles and Irish love each other, but where they used to fight and crack each other's heads they now razz each other, but are more mutually tolerant.

In the Wyoming Valley, which is the Pennsylvania anthracite region, centring around Scranton and Wilkes-Barre, there are 160,000 miners, of whom more than a third are Poles. In Nanticoke and Sugar Notch three-fourths are Poles. The others are mostly Lithuanian, Russian, Slovak, with some Irish, Welsh, and English still mixed in, and a few Italians. In the bituminous, soft-coal region, the Johnstown-Pittsburgh area, bending down into West Virginia, there are about 500,000 miners, of whom about a third are Polish. A Jew will not work underground in a coal-mine. He says it's because he's too smart. They say it's because he can't take it.

I had to take it, for a day at least as a visitor, and

when I came up into the sunshine at 4.30 the following afternoon with my face as black as friend Sigismund's, a steel helmet on my own head, with my knuckles barked and my tongue hanging out because I had tramped damned near fifteen miles in the bowels of the earth, I wondered how anybody could take it. My only consolation was that Father Kasaczun had fallen down twice to my once, and was blacker than I was. He was very funny in his robes, with his nigger face and steel helmet with the lamp askew. The lights on our helmets were electric with steel-cased batteries shaped like cigar boxes, which you fastened to your belt. It isn't anything like you thought it was down there, unless you had already been down. A Polish foreman name Martin Stelmach, who looked like an aristocrat British polo-player, and a Welsh superintendent named David Girvan, who looked like the patriarchal father of a large Irish family, took us down into the Truesdale Mine because it was *not* one which tourists and the public visit. (You can visit some coal-mines, you know, in tourist comfort, just like visiting Mammoth Cave. There are big advertising billboards inviting you.) We rode down a thousand feet, at an angle of forty-five degrees, in rattling empties, as the miners do, and got out at a kind of Broadway-and-42nd-Street-in-Hell, from which we started hoofing it over narrow-gauge sleepers through miles of passages, some of which were as bright as the Holland Tunnel, others Stygian except for the lights on our own hats. The air was as good as at the surface, and it was colder than I thought it would be. This mine has eighty miles of track down there, and once we

passed under Father Kasaczun's own parish cemetery, four miles away from the shaft by which we had entered.

They had promised to show me the best and the worst. The best was at the end of a three-mile walk . . . and then a shouting at the opening of an up-shooting tunnel not to send any cars down. We clambered up single file at an angle of almost forty-five degrees, puffing like mountain-climbers, past chamber recesses with walls of solid, beautiful anthracite like onyx or black marble. In each of these big chambers was a contract miner with two helpers, who are loading five and six cars a day. We watched one do it. He drilled six feet into what looked like soft black marble, rammed in explosives which do not ignite gas. We all went round an angle in blackness, lighted only by the lamps on our heads, and the miner shouted, pressed down his lever, and there was a muffled boom. My curiosity, not courage, started me instantly round the corner, but the foreman grabbed me and said, "Not yet." The miner went first, with a modern improvement of the Davy's lamp, to test for gas. It was all right, and we went back, and the floor was strewn with hunks of anthracite, some twice as big as a typewriter. They load the big hunks by hand, breaking them with a pick if they are too big, and the rest with ordinary shovel scoops. This, they told me, was "the best."

Then they took me miles and miles to some of the worst places. Once we went along a mile of wet, narrow tracks beside Alph the Sacred River, or its brother, and stopped at one chamber—a cavern this time in the rock,

upheld by timbers, with only a thin vein of coal running through the rock. Girvan began telling off the miner. He pointed to a jagged piece of rock above our heads, that looked like the rest to me, and said, "If you ever leave a piece like that again, I'll put you back as a common labourer." The miner said, "Yes, sir." Girvan said, "No, get it down right now! You don't want it to kill your helpers."

Then we watched that one little man with a crow-bar prying at a piece of subterranean mountain, almost over his own head. We stood back. He knew what he was doing. It came loose and down with an ungodly rumbling crash, but clear of him, and he smiled. We went on.

After a while we came to a tunnel shooting deeper down, and there were telephoning and signalling, as it used to be in the trenches between attacks, and some empties came roaring up for us, and we roared down in them, 'way down, to the end of a shaft where a Polish miner and two helpers were going through mostly rock with only a thin vein of coal, timbering as they went. The air here was heavy and thick with coal-dust. The Pole here was a company miner. He made more money, they told me, than any contract miner; yet he and his two helpers loaded maybe only half a car a day. It would cost the company thirty dollars a ton. It was incidental to driving the tunnel half a mile through the rock at that point to connect up with other parts of the labyrinth. I watched the miner. It was expert, dangerous, big-league work. They had to keep timbering, propping, fighting, and holding every inch they gained.

I kept thinking about *The Miner's Child*, Floyd Collins in the cave, and other guitar songs about men trapped in the bowels of the earth. I kept thinking that it was like war—war against the blind, treacherous, black forces of nature. I began to understand why a man would voluntarily work in the coal-mines. I began to understand why the men with black faces swaggered a little in the sunshine on the streets. They don't have very many deaths, maiming, or accidents any more, but it is still dangerous. I could begin to understand why a man would voluntarily stick to it, even though generally twenty years of it is about all any man can stand. He gets a sort of asthma from coal-dust, isn't necessarily an invalid, but is through as a miner. But something besides coal-dust gets in his blood down there. Heroism might be a name for it.

All these miners now are union workers, and I am repeating what a lot of them told me when I say they are generally satisfied to-day with working conditions, housing conditions, bonus and pay—when they work. The trouble now is that there isn't enough work. Many are on relief, and many of the good ones only work two or three days a week. No matter how poor, they practically all have radios, not for pleasure, but because they are forced to listen in every night to see whether the mine where they work will be operating next day or laying everybody off. They never know until these announcements come over the air.

Regarding the extent to which Polish-American miners, factory-workers, masses of the Poles in the industries, are tinged with Communism or any sort of



Red radicalism, I have more to report than mere hearsay. I talked with a great many workers, and participated in many discussions and arguments, but I make the following assertions on my own responsibility, and I believe they are sound.

The Pole, whether in Poland or in America, whether a college graduate or a day labourer, is close to being the bitterest enemy of Communism in the world to-day. This is due to three things, which I propose specifically to enumerate:

1. He has always been the enemy of Russia, and regards Russia as the traditional oppressor of Poland, of political liberty, and of human freedom. He has hated the Russians for centuries. No good, thinks the Pole, can come out of a Tsarist Russia or a Bolshevik Russia, or any Russia—ever!

2. In 1920 the Bolsheviki declared a new war on Poland, invaded it, smashed through to the gates of Warsaw, and were defeated by the Poles under Marshal Pilsudski in a terrific battle, which may have been one of the decisive battles of history. To a Pole Communists are "the Enemy."

3. More than 90 per cent. of all Polish Americans are definitely Christian, Roman Catholic, and I say, on my own assertion again, that you can't make Communists out of Roman Catholic Christians.

As for German Nazism, the psychology of most Poles and Polish Americans is very much the same, for similar reasons. Germany has always been the enemy on the west, just as Russia has been on the east. For hundreds of years, the Pole feels, Germany and Russia

martyrized Poland. Add to this the fact that Hitlerism and the Catholic Church are at odds. You can't make Nazis out of people who are 90 per cent. Catholic. As for Italian Fascism, they ally it rightly or wrongly with the Hitlerian trend, and dislike it immensely.

So that, for reasons which are traditional and emotional, rather than necessarily logical, your Pole anywhere is a natural enemy of Reds and dictators. I am not asserting these things controversially, but I am asserting them as being factually true, on my own observation.

The seeming paradox that five years ago Polish miners and Poles in some other labour agitations smashed as much property and raised as much hell as anybody is, I believe, because they trailed along, were carried along, with fellow-workers, fellow-members of their unions, but of other race groups, led by agitators and labour leaders who were almost never Polish. This is difficult stuff to write, and I'm not particularly trying to give the Poles a clean bill of health concerning subversive agitation in democratic America, but so far as I have been able to learn, except for a negligible few individuals and a few tiny groups, there almost isn't any such thing as a Polish-American Red or a Polish-American Communist.

What they have got, however, is a large, powerful Socialist group, led by Leon Krzycki (pronounced Chit-ski), of national scope, publishing an active daily in Detroit called *Glos Ludowy*. They are not Marxian, but almost out-and-out Norman Thomas Socialists. They call themselves also Union Labour Liberals,

Social Democrats, and are partly tied up with Lewis's C.I.O. outfit. They publish also *The Worker*, a New York weekly. The Detroit Socialist paper has Abraham Lincoln's "Of the people, for the people, by the people" in italics beside its weather-box, but Krzycki has led some pretty savage strikes, including the Fansteel one at Waukegan, Illinois, and has been in gaol several times.

Now, to me, and apparently to the experts who know more about it, there is a vast difference between Communists and Labour Liberals. To me the Communist is the enemy of capitalism, whereas the Norman Thomas Socialist is the enemy of abuses of the system, rather than of the system itself. I am not wanting to write anything controversial in a field where I lack expert technical knowledge. I am simply trying to write the truth about Polish workers, or, rather, the truth as it appeared to me after meeting and talking with a lot of them.

Since Polish farmers are scattered all over the map, I thought as good a place as any to meet and talk with some of them might be in my own Hudson Valley countryside. I knew there was a settlement of them on Turkey Hill and another towards Madalin, less than half an hour from Rhinebeck, so I got a farmer friend named George to drive me out one afternoon.

George said, "Hello, Mike," and the only way I could guess Mike Guski was a Pole was that his feet and legs up to his knees were encased in felt and diagonal string, like the pictures you see of Carpathian mountaineers.

## POLISH AMERICANS

From his knees up Mike was American. He was small, past middle age, with a face like a bright, friendly chipmunk. His brother Alex, who owned the next big farm, was a large, ruddy man with red hair, who looked like a cinnamon bear. Mike was at the back of the house setting up American machinery to saw wood. When we went into the kitchen it was an American kitchen with an electric ice-box, telephone, and radio. His wife looked like an American farmer's wife, and the only way you could know you were among people of foreign-language stock was that there was a bright lithograph calendar on the wall with some Polish words that said Joseph Kuzyna sold fertilizer and feed in Elizaville. They told me Joe was also local President of the Polish-American Club and President of the Polish National Alliance in Dutchess and Columbia counties, and that he could tell me all about Polish farmers. I said to Mike, "Okay, but I'd like you to tell me about one Polish farmer yourself."

The story Mike Guski told me, multiplied by that of several hundred thousand individuals, is the story of an immigration tide which rolled into an America that was unprepared for it, in the years around 1900. Mike came from a Polish farm, as a vast majority of all of the Poles did. He had no trade and knew only farming. He came to America to be a farmer. He had very little money, and in no time at all was broke and lost in the jungle of Greater New York, and went to work in a factory in Bayonne, New Jersey, in order to eat. He was poorly paid, and heard he could get a better factory job in Chicago. He saved a few dollars

and went, in a day coach, and could get no factory job—and found himself presently, after damned near starving, at work in a coal-mine. Then he went to Utah—and still had to work in a coal-mine. But “a little piece of land and a horse” were always his unfulfilled dream. It was by his own bewildered but tenacious initiative that he finally acquired some acres in Dutchess County on a mortgage and with a small capital, married a Polish wife, bought a horse on credit, and sent for his red-haired brother Alex, who had also come over to America to farm—and got stuck as a labourer in an industrial plant down in New Jersey. Both brothers now own handsome adjoining farms with power machinery, and the mortgages have all been paid off. They took it on the nose during the depression, but they took it on the nose. They never asked for relief. Some of these foreign-language American citizens could teach some other Americans something about that.

After leaving them we drove past a building like an old-fashioned country schoolhouse, which is the Polish-American Citizens' Club of Red Hook. It has a bar. They are all Democratic—or Republican. They hold political meetings once a week, and have dances, card parties, and occasional fights every month or so. We met John Lapinski, and then visited Charlie Paul and Tony Demboski, whose names had once been Casimir and Ladislaus. Mike's first name had been Marcelli. Charlie was a big, pock-marked man, mad as hell that morning because somebody had poisoned one of his cows. I said, “Would that be because you were foreign-born?”

"Good God, no!" he said. "There is nothing like that around here. It might have happened to me in Poland."

We met some Rojeskis, Adamskis, and a family named Stroziniak. They all spoke with accents, but this was about the only way you could distinguish them from any other prosperous farmers of the region. They had nearly all been coal-miners or factory labourers for a while. They are slowly fulfilling the dream for which they originally came to America—and this, I believe, is as nearly the theme-song, the *leitmotif*, of Polish immigration and settlement in America as any generality about five million people can ever be.

We drove through Madalin, across Turkey Hill, over the line into Columbia County, and went to see Joe Kuzyna at Elizaville. He was rich and prosperous as farmers go, doing a big fertilizer and feed business as a side-line, and is probably the leading Polish-American citizen among the farm groups in the Hudson Valley.

He told me there were sixty-five good-sized Polish farms along the Hudson in this immediate region—and I believe these counties are as typical and average as any northern agricultural countryside east of the Mississippi. I live there myself, own land there. We are close to New England, conservative, traditional, English-speaking Americans, who have been there for a couple of centuries, as I said at the outset of this book, but there is no prejudice any longer against this large Polish group which has been there for a couple of decades. They are on friendly terms with their neighbours, and

are as much an integral part of agricultural Dutchess County as if they had been there a hundred years and had never spoken anything but English.

Everybody knows that there was prejudice against foreign-language foreigners, especially Central Europeans. A lot of it was killed during and after the World War. Among the four hundred thousand volunteers who responded to the call of President Wilson for service in the World War 40,000 were of Polish descent. This was fantastically out of proportion to the number of Poles living in the United States. It is, of course, pure accident that the first American soldier to fall in France was of Polish descent, and that two Polish boys, one from Milwaukee and the other from Chicago, were the first American doughboys to capture a German prisoner. But all these things are interesting to think about. There are still Americans who retain the habit of regarding Poles, Czechs, and their cousins, not merely as foreigners, but as "bohunks," "hunkies," "Polacks," forgetting that historically as well as actually to-day they are part of the bone, fibre, sinew, and soul of America.

## VI. *Russian Americans*

IT WILL BE GOOD HAY," SAID MAKAR FEDORTCHOUK, PULLING WISPS OF IT out of his hair, and wiping more of it from his thick, perspiring, enormous face, streaked with grease from the mowing-machine.

He had halted his team and machine in the field under the hot sun, and sat on the iron seat as we talked. He had an enormous belly without being fat, and a face that was enormous, too, though handsome in its way, despite the grime and sweat. He was reddish-haired, sandy, cross-eyed, with a nose like a large red beet, yet there was something handsome about his rugged, grease-streaked vastness in the sunshine.

"Gerasim the carpenter is dead," said my slender, cool, clean companion.

"God rest his soul," said Makar Fedor (as his friends called him for short), and laughed when the off-horse made a rumbling noise that might have been "Amen."

I was standing in a field near Westbury, Long Island, only an hour from New York's skyscrapers, in the year 1937, but I was also in White Russia, Holy Russia. A bulb-shaped dome like the Kremlin's in miniature surmounted by a cross was visible in the village of East Meadow through the trees. My companion in riding-breeches, who had just mentioned the death of their mutual friend the carpenter, was Prince Gregory



Gagarin, late of his Majesty's Hussars of the Guard. The countryside in all directions was spotted by the farms of a thousand other Russians, and we were on our way to visit Father Joseph Menad, a bearded monk from Toula, "City of Samovars," who now presided at the altar of the East Meadow Russian Greek Orthodox Church.

My new acquaintance, Makar Fedortchouk, was a farmer from North Russia, who had once been a corporal, a groom, in one of the Tsar's cavalry regiments, had worked in the Harriman stables when he first came over years ago, had bought land, prospered—and was still proud of being a peasant. How Russian he is you can imagine from the fact that he had built fine houses with modern conveniences for his two grown sons, yet lived with kerosene lamps and candles in his own house, though electricity ran past his door, because he and his Russian wife had disputed about which should pay the deposit for the meter—and neither would give in. There was no bitterness between them, I gathered, when we visited the house. They were just being Russian about it.

I was in an American farmhouse except that Russian cross-stitch curtains hung at the windows, with a samovar in the kitchen, and framed ikons in the east corners of the rooms. Mrs Fedortchouk was as large as Makar Fedor, in a blue American Mother Hubbard. I said I thought they were being "Russian" about the electricity. She agreed, and told me of a neighbour (nick-named "Tolstoi" because of his long white beard) who drank lots of whisky, whose wife had hidden sixty

dollars twenty years ago and wouldn't give them to him. He had decided to divorce her. They started dividing their household goods. Each took one bed, one chair, one mattress—and then they were stumped because they had only one samovar between them. So they still live together. "Tolstoi's" wife has never told him where she hid the sixty dollars. The way the Fedortchouks lived was a stage setting for such happenings. They eat heavily—cabbage, potatoes, beets, pork, heavy sausage which they make themselves, and drink more tea than coffee, not to mention vodka. They keep their bodies clean, except for the healthy grease of labour, steam themselves as well as bathe, but don't care how dirty their clothes get, and don't mind domestic disorder. Makar Fedor is a personage, treasurer of the church. When he signs a cheque he must have spectacles on his nose. Any pair will do. He can never find his own. He just sits like a character out of Dostoevsky and demands pen, ink, spectacles. Another Russian takes a pair off his own nose and presents them with a bow to the treasurer.

I said, "On the whole, do you like America?"

Makar Fedor said, "I am here now many years, and will never go away. I would not stay many years in a place I did not like unless I was chained or imprisoned. Is that an answer?"

I said, "Yes, that is an answer."

He said, "Over there I worked for thirty-nine dollars a year—a whole year for thirty-nine dollars. Here I spend *forty*-nine dollars in one day for one thing, and still have money in the bank. America is the best

country in the world if you work. I work, and I love it."

"He's Russian all right," said Prince Gagarin as we rode along, and I said, "Yes, he might have come out of Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard*. And you might have danced with Anna Karenina if you'd been old enough. Would you mind telling me how *you* came over?"

He told me some of it, but was too modest to tell it all. I have pieced the rest out with the help of his White Russian friends in New York. Scion of the great Gagarin family in the north and a crack young cavalry officer in the Tsar's Hussars, he was arrested in the Revolution in 1918, and the peasants of his own countryside threatened to storm the gaol unless he was released. So he was taken out before dawn to be shot. He is small, wiry, quick as lightning in his movements, with a small, aristocratic head, slightly Tartar, like romantic portraits of the young Attila. And, walking across the field between two guards on the way to execution, he "did his stuff." He was wounded too, but escaped, crossed Russia dressed as a woman, joined the French Army, and went back into Russia to fight the Bolsheviks. He arrived in New York in 1924 with one old suitcase and a borrowed five-dollar bill, roundabout, *via* Constantinople. He was a day labourer in New York, shovelled snow in the streets, and got a small job in a perfumery factory—a detail which was later capitalized by a Croatian who had no title, coronet, or name.

When Prince Gagarin tried to get a better job they said, "What is your profession? Have you no pro-

fession?" And they still tell down in Wall Street that he replied to several serious bankers, "Oh, yes, I have a profession. I am a professional murderer."

What he meant was that he had gone from the Tsar's "West Point" straight into the cavalry, and that all his training and experience had been in war. What they thought was that he wanted a job as a gorilla. Around 1928 it occurred to him that he had another "profession" after all—that he was a professional horseman. In 1929 he opened a riding academy near Westbury, now has a tanbark ring, fifty horses, teaches aristocratic young Americans to ride and play polo, is happy and prosperous there, with his wife, Princess Gagarin, also Russian. She is opening her own kilns to specialize in decorating porcelain and china—"in initials only, simple monograms or family crests," she said. The day I visited them a kiln was being finished.

After luncheon in their home, which is like that of any Long Island squire, except for the framed ikons in east corners of all its rooms—just like Makar Fedor's—Prince Gregory told me the story of the church we were going to visit, and it was a tale that seemed to me even more "Russian" than he or Makar Fedor. When he had first come out to Long Island the Russian farmers had already built the church, but in fantastic and turbulent circumstances. They had bought land in East Meadow, then hired a Russian priest who was also to be the architect. The priest had the contract drawn up by a Russian-Jewish lawyer, and the priest was to get a thousand dollars as architect when the church was finished, then a small salary the first year,

but his salary was to grow progressively larger *every year*! Or something fantastically impossible like that. To make the plot thicker, they discovered when the church was completed that it had been built on the wrong land! The Yankee owner had placidly watched it go up on *his* plot adjoining the church plot, and then made the foreigners buy it. There had to be a deed, so, they being already afraid of the priest and his lawyers, the deed was made out to a Russian farmer who was president of the church board. He went round bragging that the church belonged to him—so another row was started. By that time they all distrusted each other, so they compromised by having the church and land deeded to the Blessed Virgin Mary! Property deals like that were frequent in Medieval Europe—but the Queen of Heaven was in a new *rôle* among modern Long Island real-estate owners. Still quarrelling with their priest, they finally appealed to the Metropolitan, titular head of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, and since at that time the whole church was in an uproar because the Bolsheviks had sent over a rival Metropolitan of their own to take over everything in America, the Long Island farmers, not knowing how *that* row in the high courts would turn out, made the same appeal to both Metropolitans! It was the Bolshi Metropolitan who answered first. He sent them a new “priest,” a Bolshevik peasant army sergeant, who wasn’t a priest yet at all! This fine fellow got three hundred dollars in cash from somewhere, and bought himself an ordination hurriedly—from the same Bolshevik Metropolitan. The Russian farmers on Long Island weren’t Bolshevik,

and didn't like their new priest. They were naturalized American citizens, and didn't give a tinker's damn about Bolshevism. When Prince Gagarin moved there the farmers, who knew that his ancient family had been friends of the peasants and patrons of the Church for hundreds of years under the Tsars, called on him and said, "Godly man, save us from this ungodly mess."

So Prince Gregory, greatly amused, though deeply devout as any peasant, had straightened out the mess by getting the church properly incorporated, chasing out the Bolshevik sergeant, bringing in Father Joseph Menad, who had been a monsignor in Toula. So it is now "Trinity Church, Inc.," and a beautiful thing to see. In general design it is "Long Island American," built of wood, painted white with a white paling fence, but it is Holy Russia with a bulbous dome, glowing ikons, and curtained altar which no man but the priest can traverse and no woman enter. Near by, in an ordinary jerry-built bungalow, lived Father Menad, who is celibate because he is a monk as well as a priest, and who didn't know we were coming to visit him.

Prince Gregory said, "He's probably out in the backyard in overalls sawing wood. I'd better go in and prepare him."

Prince Gregory went in, and presently returned and sat with us in the car. In about ten minutes a noble if grinning vision from *Boris Godunov* appeared on the stoop of the bungalow—a frocked and bearded monk who blessed and welcomed us, after which he invited us indoors.

It was a sordid little living-room, in a sordid little house on a concrete road with a hot-dog stand and filling-station down the way, yet in a moment, spread out on the dining-table, were piles of the most gorgeous silver-and-gold ecclesiastical panoplies I have ever seen except in the throne-room of the Vatican. The silver was real, and the gold was real gold. One chasuble, silver on red silk, dated from Tsar Paul I. There were ecclesiastical vestments and altar cloths that would have made Chaliapin weep with joy—and one altar cloth which we were not permitted to touch because a piece of the body of a saint was wax-enclosed and sewn in it. There was a chaplet of amber with great topazes from the Ural Mountains, with a pendant of gold and agate. From a metal box Father Joseph brought out a gorgeous crown (imitation jewels and gilt this time), which he wears for High Mass. Prince Gagarin's son, fourteen, whispered, pointing to the box, "Last Easter he forgot his key, and we had to break the lock."

Father Joseph showed me the photograph of a procession group posed outside the little church that Easter, with ikons, canopies, himself full-panoplied with the crown on his head—and a great American flag draped across the whole front of the church. I gulped a little, as I do to keep from crying when they set off the red flares on the stage sometimes in Carnegie Hall towards the crashing finale of the *1812 Overture*, and when we were back in the car I asked Prince Gagarin how on earth a small rural church in America happened to have all that gorgeous ecclesiastic treasure. He said quietly, with an enigmatic smile as he lighted

a cigarette, "Father Menad was in charge of the sacristy in Toula."

Apart from White Russian peasant members of that congregation with their large families—growing beets, potatoes, cabbages, and raising pigs—there are sundry Russians in almost all the trades around East Meadow and Roosevelt, Long Island, including four still youngish midshipmen from the late Tsar's equivalent of Annapolis, who have gone into the house-painting business. They are Nicholas Goris (who shortened his name from Gorisontoff) and Boris Afrosimoff, Ivan Chulanofsky, and Eugene Kotovich. They are doing well in America and want to be naturalized, but are having trouble doing it because they can't prove they are there! It sounds self-evident, but they are up against red tape. Escaping from Russia, they finally arrived in the port of Charleston, by way of Vladivostok and Constantinople, working their way aboard ship. They didn't get themselves admitted at the port of Charleston because, having no money, they wanted to work their way to New York on other ships and sign off at the port of New York. They got tired of waiting in Charleston, hitch-hiked to New York, and consequently can't prove that they're there at all. It's pure technicality, since their identities, histories, etc., are all provable.

But driving back towards New York, with its towers soon looming, I found it hard to believe that *any* of the people I had met were actually there on Long Island. As a matter of fact, Russians are "unbelievable" in any setting, even in their own cherry orchards.



Good, bad, indifferent, rich or poor, they are always fantastic. Yet I am inclined curiously to suspect that the Russian is more like the American than any other foreign-language American citizen. It could be true, you know, because Russia and America are more alike geographically, climatically, topographically, and in some other respects also, than any two other countries. Both are vast, with forests, prairies, frontiers, great cities, waste-lands, climate ranging from cold to tropical—and both have enormous, *conglomerate* populations. Furthermore, if you look at a map you can understand immediately why the French and Swiss, for instance, are petty, and the insular British repressed about everything except empire-building. If you look at a map you can similarly understand why Russians and Americans are *not petty*. Both peoples are large, casual, kindly, sometimes brutal, sometimes childish, often heroic, simple, yet extremely complicated and subtle. The American goes in for hijacking, highway robbery, burglary, and big-league banditry, but seldom cheats. Rich or poor, he is seldom "cheap." He is not petty. He can take it on the nose. He has guts aplenty, and most of these qualities are Russian too. The Russian often seems more different from the American than he really is because he is definitely more emotional, more temperamental, more inclined to fantasy, but let us not altogether forget that the American too is fantastic. Herman Melville with his *Moby Dick*, Poe, Mark Twain, the late Will Rogers, Gertrude Stein, Upton Sinclair with his impractical, beautiful Utopias, the Paul Bunyan legends, Harpo Marx, are as fantastic as Balieff

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or Dostoevsky. The Russian is more pessimistic, more fatalistic than the American—because he is more acutely conscious of his soul. Every Russian, high and low, has a soul, and damned well knows it. He doesn't mind talking about it, trotting it out, beating it in public. Americans generally have souls, too, but they are more reticent about them. The American is cousin to the Englishman, who considers his soul to be in bad taste. Like sex, the soul is sacred—and also a little bit in bad taste. Like sex, with the pure Englishman, the soul is either taboo as a subject of conversation or a thing to make jokes about. Your Russian is more like a child—or a saint—or a savage. So is the American, perhaps, a little.

Back now, consorting with the Russians in New York, I began a series of strange encounters. First I introduce you to a giant of a priest whose personality is worth a ton of Moscow novels. He is the "Paul Bunyan" of the Russian Greek Orthodox Church in America, with the difference that he is very much alive to-day, and that tales about him are mostly true. He is the Reverend Vasili Kourdiumoff, Rector of the Church of Christ the Saviour, at 51 East 121st Street—but he so narrowly missed being a world champion wrestler instead that you can almost guess it when you see his towering mountain of a figure in the street, generally accompanied by a Russian wolfhound, almost as gigantic as he is. If the Old Testament angel who outwrestled Jacob had met Father Kourdiumoff instead I am afraid it would have been just too bad for the angel.

It was a long time ago that he decided he wouldn't be a professional wrestler after all, because he didn't like raw meat. They used to feed them on raw meat and gunpowder in those days. So he became a priest. But one night, seeing a new champion strut to an adjoining table in a restaurant, he wrote him a polite line on the back of a menu and sent it by the head waiter.

It read, "Come over here and I'll tear you to bits."

He is a true Man of God, devout and mystical, but the casual way in which he gives his cross to be kissed, as if it were a lollypop, gossiping meanwhile about the North Pole fliers, is reminiscent of the casualness of that great Early Father of the Church who wrote the immortal words, "I am God's Honey, and He is mine." This true priest is "God's Honey" if any priest ever was.

I am sure God must smile in the clouds and forgive him, as He surely did that other priest who was once invited to a Sunday dinner at an American farmer's house on Long Island during Russian Lent, and found on the table a roast sucking pig, of which he was inordinately fond. He solved his dilemma by waving his cross over it and saying, "Lord, let it be salmon!"

New York's Russian Cathedral is down on 105 East Houston Street, administered by the Metropolitan, the Most Reverend Archbishop Theophilos, where you can hear as gorgeous music as anywhere on earth at ten o'clock every Sunday morning, but not all the glory down there can dim the light of Father Kourdiumoff up-town.

It was in the top of a building at 305 East 46th Street, New York, in the heart of the "East Side" that I met that notorious Siberian peasant "Uncle Jascha" Sartakoff, surrounded by rabbit skins and a beautiful blonde niece in brilliant scarlet gloves. Her pale blue eyes and golden hair were like one of his own Siberian summers. He is prouder of being a peasant than most Romanovs are of their royal titles because he thinks he descended from Genghis Khan, and also because he has quietly revolutionized several world industries in the field of bio-chemistry—which is the only sort of revolution he goes in for.

His niece, Helen Novikoff, was wearing the vivid scarlet gloves because she was working that morning on some of the rabbit skins, saturated with mercury nitrate, which is deadly poison. It was a laboratory with highly complicated machinery, shining like an ultra-modern stage set, with charts and graphs on the walls. Uncle Jascha is engaged just now in trying to revolutionize another industry. This Siberian peasant, university graduate in bio-chemistry, is in process of inventing a new method which may put mercury nitrate permanently out of the picture.

Uncle Jascha is well past fifty, large, ruddy, red-haired like an Afghan mountaineer, and thinks he is a Tartar. The name was once Sartak, which you'll find in all the encyclopedias, and there was already a Siberian Sartakoff in the time of Ivan the Terrible. His family comes from the Altai Mountains, over against Mongolia, and he was born in a log-house in the Altai, where his grandfather had been a miner and his father

Russian and Slavic Jews, generally speaking, will not go down in coal-mines or plough the earth. They'd rather work in factories, sweat-shops, sewing-machine lofts, start little businesses, or carry peddlars' packs than dig coal or potatoes. But the coal-mines and the farms are about the only places they haven't gone into. While their working masses still labour and still sometimes live in crowded tenement ghettos which are more of a disgrace to American municipal government than to the Jews themselves, their outstanding individuals have achieved success, celebrity, wealth, in almost every intellectual, research, scientific, and artistic field, as well as in big business.

There are more than 350,000 Russians in the five boroughs of New York, three-fourths of whom are Jewish—more Russians than in any other city outside Russia; admirals, generals,<sup>1</sup> grand duchesses, princes,

<sup>1</sup> Prince Obolensky's assistant at the St Regis is Basil Alderberg, whose grandfather was Grand Marshal under Alexander II; he himself served in the Emperor's Own Rifles of the Guard before the Revolution, and in the Ritz-Carlton, Boston, the Ritz-Carlton, New York, and the Madison, New York, thereafter. Prince Paul Chavchavadze, who served in the "Wild Division" in the Caucasus, under Grand Duke Michael, works for the Cunard Line. Colonel Pyotr Zuboff, of the Chevalier Guard, teaches at Columbia. Prince Alexis Obolensky teaches music. Prince Serge Gagarin works for a shipping firm, and his brother, Prince Gregory, of the Hussars of the Guard, runs a riding academy on Long Island. Sikorsky (amphibians), Seversky (bombers), and Sergieffsky (speed planes) are all White Russians, and they are three of the best designers of aircraft in the United States. Colonel Polushkin, the greatest living authority on Russian heraldry and lineage, is the doorman at the Savoy-Plaza in New York. Impostors detest his hotel. Boris Bakhmeteff, who was Kerensky's ambassador to the United States, owns the Lion Match Company now. Admiral Zaeff runs an elevator at the Lion factory, and General Kazarinoff is the night watchman. One of the most genial and successful of the Russian *émigrés* is a

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paupers, and peasants; Hebrews, high and low; Russians of every pigmentation and political complexion—and what I presently discovered is that they don't necessarily dislike or hate each other here, though they lived on opposite sides of walls or fences in Old Russia. Of course, I met occasional "Countess Xenias" who would say of any Russian Semitics, no matter how distinguished, "Oh, they're not Russians at all, they're dirty Jews"; and occasional bitter Jewish radicals who would say of the aristocrats, "They're bloody supercilious beasts, and always will be"; but it was Prince Paul Alexandrovich Chavchavadze, executive of the Cunard Line, married to a Romanov princess, daughter of Grand Duke George Mikhailovich and former Princess Marie of Greece, who said, "You mustn't fail to go down and meet Mark Weinbaum, editor of *Novoye Russkoye Slovo*. He's one of the best-informed and

Georgian named Alexander Tarsaidze. He worked with the late Prince Matchabelli, and now has started a perfume company of his own, to make "Les Parfums Chevalier Garde." Mr Tarsaidze was born in a town called Gori, near Stalin's birthplace. He still remembers the excitement the day Stalin robbed a bank in Tiflis. Mr Tarsaidze actively assists two of the annual White Russian social events, the Allaverdy Ball and the Russian Naval Ball. He graduated from the Russian Naval Academy, which was founded by Peter the Great on November 19, 1701. Wherever the graduates are, he says, "in Siam or China or Brazil," they gather on November 19 to celebrate with a banquet of goose and apples. Empress Anna, the wife of Peter the Great, sent goose and apples to the first Academy dinner in 1701. The youngest officer at these gatherings always salutes the oldest, who in New York is Admiral Linden, of the class of '61. "Thank you very much," the Admiral always says, "but you forgot to bury me." *Judge*, from which this amusing *résumé* is taken, seems to have made one error. Prince Paul Chavchavadze is too young to have served in any division, "wild" or tame. It was his father, Prince Alexander, who served with the Grand Duke Michael in the Caucasus.

most interesting Russians in America. I'll 'phone him and fix an appointment for you, if you like."

Hatreds, conflicts, antagonisms, still exist aplenty, but I found that often when I got to the "tops" in any group there were plenty of individuals who knew they were in a new world, making a new life, a new social fabric, and could say *tovarich* (comrade) to all fellow-Russians in the land of equal opportunity for all. I realize that there is another side, and that some of the haters will sneer at me for presenting this optimistic angle of the picture. But I am telling what I heard and saw with my own ears and eyes, and do sincerely believe that this optimistic angle will be the whole circle in the end.

For instance, come along with me and see Mark Weinbaum, editor of *Slovo*, the oldest Russian daily in America, at 413 East 14th Street. He is pure Jewish, but Jewish as was the late Adolph Ochs of the New York *Times*; and *Slovo* is a "Jewish" newspaper only if you think the New York *Times* was. It has by far the largest circulation of all Russian-language newspapers in America, 85 per cent. of its circulation is non-Jewish, and it is definitely anti-Communist, anti-Bolshevist. I asked Mr Weinbaum first about Russian Jews and what they did in America. He said, "You know. They're mostly pedlars, pushcart vendors, small storekeepers, garment-, fur-, and factory-workers, world-famous celebrities in the arts and sciences, multi-millionaires, movie, theatrical, and radio tycoons, tailors, gangsters, white-slavers, thieves, Supreme Court judges, and social-welfare workers—but most of all

they are garment-, fur-, and clothing-workers. There must be 200,000 of these in and around New York alone, mostly in the unions. There's a Russian-Polish Cloakmakers' Local, and, of course, there's the Amalgamated Clothing Workers with 175,000 Jewish members, of whom at least 125,000 are Russian Jews."

"What's their political complexion generally?" I asked him.

"Labour party, I should say," he replied reflectively. "Liberal Socialist with some Communists, a few militant Communists, and subversive agitators mixed in. I assure you, however, and your State Department knows it, if your daily Press doesn't, that the militant Communist group in this country is smaller and less influential than the noise they make would indicate. I think I can prove it to you by the Jewish daily newspapers—the four leading ones. You know, of course, that the largest is *Vorwärts*. It has a 150,000 circulation and is Socialist Moderate. Its seventy-year-old editor, who is a true idealist, said to me the other day, 'I have been a Socialist all my life, but if there ever comes a time when I have to choose between liberty and Socialism, for myself and all humanity, I'll be on the side of liberty under any name.' The second largest Jewish daily is the *Morning Journal*, with a 100,000 circulation, and it, my friend, is conservative Republican. The third largest is *The Day*, Democratic, with about 80,000. At the bottom of the list is *Freiheit*, Communist, with a 25,000 circulation, against the combined 330,000 of the non-Communist Jewish dailies. You can draw your own conclusion."



on land, air, or sea. Chekalov, Baidukov, and Beliakov made their sixty-three-hour dash over the Pole on tea and lemon, then polished off two bottles of brandy after they had landed, as an "appetizer" for a hearty breakfast, and started kidding everybody, including the camera-men and the Associated Press reporters. We gave three cheers and took them to our hearts.<sup>1</sup>

An additional, more serious reason Americans liked their achievement is that numbers of Americanized Russians are "tops" and popular in American air circles. Sikorsky and Seversky are famous "American" names. Igor Sikorsky, at Bridgeport, Connecticut, who became a naturalized American in 1929, built and flew the first multi-motor, developed the United Air Craft Corporation, and produced some of the biggest multi-motored amphibians which the American Navy now flies. Eighty of the best American bombers were built by Alexander Seversky, the "one-legged flyer," whose New York-New Orleans flight broke three speed records. Out at Farmingdale, Long Island, he is specializing in speed 'planes. While these two names are American household words, almost American common nouns, there are a dozen other Russians, nearly all naturalized Americans, whose names are famous in their own technical aviation fields, including Michael and Serge Gluhareff, Michael Gregor, Korvan Kruhovsky, Michael Watters, George de Bothezat, Illya I. Islamoff, Alexander Kartveli, A. A. Toochkoff, A. Pishvanov, Serge Tchemesoff, Paul A. Samoilov.

<sup>1</sup> The story of this flight is told by Baidukov in *Over the North Pole* (Harrap).

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And America gave just as hearty a welcome to a couple of other comic Soviet "heroes," professional humorists, Ilf and Petrov, who came over to discover that "America is located on a large automobile highway," which they explored from coast to coast in a flivver. They wrote a book called *Little Golden America*, which the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. found equally uproarious. They kidded us Americans, praised us, and panned us in a way we could appreciate and understand—found Henry Ford, whom they met and liked, "a familiar Russian peasant type," and the average American "a hard-working man who sneers or laughs at Washington, with all its laws, at Chicago, with all its bandits, at New York, with its Wall Street; he asks only one thing of his country—to let him alone, and not to interfere with his listening to the radio or going to the movies." They found that laughter in America was "a habit, like brushing the teeth," and invented "a typical American conversation" which seems to me identically the kind of stuff, in its fairness and unfairness, that Mark Twain kidded Europe with in *Innocents Abroad*.

FIRST AMERICAN [*smiling*]. How's business?

SECOND AMERICAN [*laughing*]. Very bad, very bad. How's yours?

FIRST AMERICAN [*laughing uproariously*]. Disgusting! I lost my job yesterday.

SECOND AMERICAN [*bursting with laughter*]. How's your wife?

FIRST AMERICAN. She's quite dangerously ill. [*He tries to make a serious face, but vigorous, joyous*

*laughter breaks out again.*] Yesterday we called—ha, ha, ha—yesterday—oh, I can't bear it—yesterday we called the doctor.

SECOND AMERICAN. Really? Is that so? Oh, what a pity! [*Laughing uproariously, slaps first American on the back.*]

Despite—or because of—the crude and so easily satirized tendency of Americans to laugh in the face of depression and calamity—it's so much more subtle to "smile when the heart is breaking," but howl like hell when the health or pocket-book is hit, as the more refined Europeans do—I am American enough to believe that the U.S.A. is a happier land than the U.S.S.R. is, or ever will be, and that America can afford to exchange comparison, friendly visits, and ideas. I think all this has a tendency to melt down by peaceful process many once ardent Communistic Russians who have tried both forms of social economic life.

For instance, at a desk where I sat in New York there sat recently a Red revolutionary coal-miner named Grensky who had worked in West Virginia for years, hating America, hating his employers, agitating. His new story was this. He had decided to go back to Soviet Russia, as an ideal land, the Utopia of his dreams. He went and took with him a group of other discontented Red Russian miners from the West Virginia mines, including a number of experts. They went to their Utopia, stayed a long while, and are back now working in the West Virginia mines, after having suffered what he calls "a terrible disillusion." They had gone, full of

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enthusiasm, to the Kuzbas in Siberia. They lacked facilities, lacked food, lacked medical aid, were decimated by typhoid and accidents. Some died, the others scattered; he and a few of them came back. And this is one of the things he said: "Before I left for Russia I hated America. I was so mad at America that I lay awake nights wishing that I could invent such a bomb that it could blow the whole of West Virginia to hell. Now I go back there, and if I lie awake nights thinking about bombs it will be to put them under Communists."

He doesn't think the West Virginia mines are a Paradise. He thinks some of the treatment the workers get is still lousy, but he thinks it's ten times better than Soviet Russia.

If you are interested in such things you can go out to Irvington, New Jersey, and call on an interesting Russian named A. Tawdul at 74 40th Street. He will verify an even more striking story about a group of Russian-American farmers whom he took back to Soviet Russia. They went over there and tried it. They are nearly all back in America now, farming American farms, becoming American citizens, anti-Bolshevist. But every story has two true sides. There are other Russian-American farmers, miners, technicians, who have gone back to Russia and remained. I wonder, however, if anywhere in Russia they'll find any better experiment in Russian Brotherhood than the Russian-American democratic experiment known as ROOVA over near Lakewood, New Jersey, where 4000 Russians, headed by an American named Winslow, who used to

be a Russian named Vassilieff, have bought a lot of land, including an estate, forming a mutual-aid society with insurance features, an agriculture colony, a home for the aged, and other social-welfare features. "Roova" is a synthetic word like "Socony" or "Nabisco," and is an outgrowth of social-welfare work of the Russian Greek Orthodox Church.

The Russians of all complexions were more obliging than any other foreign-language group I have investigated, and were eager I shouldn't miss anything, whether it was on their side of the fence or not, so that after meeting once angry miners, peasant farmers, Jewish editors, and garment-workers I found myself in another world one day, after less than an hour's taxi ride, seated with the Princess Alexis Obolensky at 55 Park Avenue. She was born Princess Troubetskoi, and was a very great lady in old Tsarist Russia. Now she sells quilts, runs a dress-shop, and is still a very great lady. Large, tall, gracious, and above all a kindly person radiating kindness, one of the first things she said to me was, "We really love America, you know. America is so big and so *kind*." I couldn't help thinking of the old Persian proverb, that if a thief rides a stolen camel to the moon he will find the moon inhabited by thieves, but that if a saint goes there he'll find it inhabited by saintly people. I think, however, there is more to it than that in the case of Princess Obolensky. When she and her husband, the Prince Alexis, fled from Russia with a string of pearls and a Stradivarius they first went to Paris. They found the French subtle, keenly intelli-

gent, but small and petty—neither big nor kind. They also found Melba—and, since Prince Alexis had a voice as well as a fiddle, they did well in France—but never loved it as they now do America.

“The only work I knew in Russia,” said Princess Obolensky, “was embroidery. I used to work with and teach the peasants in our lovely Volga country. Now I work with and teach the people of your mountains. We are making beautiful things down in the mountains of Kentucky, near Hardingsburg. There are only two classes of people who can do real hand embroidery, or care anything about it—the real aristocracy and the real people. The great middle class here and everywhere prefer machine work.”

She showed me beautiful things hanging there in her shop, and repeated sincerely, “Americans are so kind. If a lady can’t buy she will tell me nice words.”

Soon Princess Obolensky was “telling me nice words” about tangles of names which puzzle Americans. Herself a Troubetskoi, she had married an Obolensky, and now, more recently in America, two of her daughters had married Troubetskoi princes. She was explaining to me that in old White Russia the key, top families of the Moscow and St Petersburg aristocracy had always been a very small group. “Society,” in that ultimate sense, had been small, in her own top circle back in Russia—only a few families, some dozen or more, like the Galitzines, Troubetskois, Obolenskys, Gagarins, etc., and, of course, the Romanovs at the top of everything. In consequence a dozen or so big families had been marrying among themselves from

time immemorial. It's the same thing, of course, with America's own Hudson River aristocracy. Everybody is everybody else's cousin.

For instance, the beautiful young Princess Natasha Galitzine, who had been in Hollywood for a while and then came to New York, had married Prince Vasili Romanov, son of Grand Duke Alexander and Grand Duchess Xenia, who was a sister of the Tsar. They had opened a beauty parlour in Cincinnati. Similarly Princess Aleka Galitzine, who had worked in a Marshall Field store in Chicago, had married Prince Rotislav Romanov, who once had a job with the Missouri Pacific Railway, son of the Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich. Prince Rotislav's first cousin, Princess Nina, previously mentioned, is married to Prince Paul Alexandrovich Chavchavadze, who is, in his turn, a first cousin of Princess Aleka! Other Romanovs in the United States (only about ten in all) are the Princess Xenia, sister of Princess Nina, who married William B. Leeds; Prince George (son of Grand Duke Konstantin), who once worked at Saks Fifth Avenue, where he began as a floor-walker; and the Grand Duchess Marie, daughter of Grand Duke Paul, highest titled Russian in America, who worked at Bergdorf Goodman's and wrote *The Education of a Princess*. She had been married, and was divorced from Prince William of Sweden. She has been abroad for a year or more on journalistic assignments.

The pair who perhaps best typify the fictional, romantic, dramatized concept of authentic titled Russian exiles, which had its gay apotheosis in *Tovarich*,

are Prince and Princess Chavchavadze. Their history, identity, and background are so amusingly similar to those of the prince and princess in the stage comedy that people often ask them whether they were the real-life models for those two delightful fictional characters. The answer is no, but the domestic set-up is identical. Prince Paul is "merely" a prince of a very high family like the Obolenskys and Troubetskoi, but not royal, while the lovely wife who married him in London, and has consequently promised to love, honour, and obey him, is a Romanov! Just as in *Tovarich*, Prince Paul would have been constrained by etiquette in old Tsarist Russia to bow low before her, for the Princess Nina is a princess royal, daughter of Grand Duke George, niece to the Queen of Greece. He is doing well now in the passenger executive department of the Cunard White Star Line, but it wasn't very long ago that they were having adventures somewhat similar to those recently depicted in the play—though they never disguised themselves as anybody's maid and butler.

Eddie Wasserman, who goes in for collecting celebrities and mixing them with high society, and who has been known to entertain prize-fighters, Nobel prize winners, Indians, Belmonts, Vanderbilts, Harrimans, Seligmans, Peggy Hopkins Joyce, and the late Princess Murat at the same cocktail party tells of a night on Cape Cod which must have been as funny as anything in the stage comedy. He was entertaining a couple of conventional diamond-collared dowagers and their banker husbands, who had once met grand-ducal Russian ladies as diamond-collared as themselves in the



great world before the World War. On this night on Cape Cod Eddie was taking them to call on the Prince and Princess Chavchavadze, who, they knew, was daughter to a grand duke—and they were wearing all their diamonds. As the Rolls Royce was bumping slowly along a narrow shore road which seemed to be getting worse and leading nowhere they came to a fork, and the headlights picked up by the roadside a little, dark-haired girl, bareheaded, in sneakers and an old gingham dress. Eddie called, "Can you perhaps tell me the turn to Prince Chavchavadze's house?"

The girl scampered over with a grin, and said, "*But this is Nina!*"

So the formal presentations took place through the window of the car, and it didn't help at all that the dowagers knew Eddie Wasserman sometimes indulged in practical jokes.

When they entered the cottage Prince "Pavlik," as his friends call him, was in an old sweater, and they had to sit on boxes, and there weren't enough glasses to go round, so that some of them drank out of china cups from the ten-cent store. The place was badly lighted with smoky kerosene lamps and candles, and once the princess royal imitated a small dog, crawling and barking on the floor. One diamond collar had already disappeared—into the nervous dowager's own handbag—and Eddie says the tension in the candlelight was lovely. . . .

Of course, they don't always marry "each other" and terrify dowagers who afterwards invite them to

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week-ends, as in the case of Prince "Pavlik" and the Princess Nina. Some of this top Russian group has married directly into top American society. An outstanding instance is Prince Serge Obolensky, who married a sister of Vincent Astor. He invited me to lunch one day at the St Regis, which he directs, to help me about this chapter. He is tall, conventional, serious, handsome, and industrious. It may be his Oxford background which makes him seem so completely at home in an Anglo-Saxon country, but it may be something deeper in the serious pattern of his life. The cynical, obvious impression of a big title marrying a big fortune is in his case wide of the mark. Prince Obolensky graduated with honours from Christ Church, Oxford, rushed back to his country when war was declared, enlisted as a common trooper, and came out as an officer of the Chevalier Guard. When revolution came he escaped to England and went to work on the Stock Exchange. He worked hard, did well, and married Miss Astor in England. He has continued to work hard as if he had never married an Astor. They came to America, and he worked for three solid years at the Chase National Bank learning American business, and since then has worked in real estate and other business with his brother-in-law. It was he who transformed the Astor tenement district on the upper East Side around 80th Street, near the Doctor's Hospital, into modern, sanitary housing.

"When people saw the red, blue, yellow doors, and shutters, the bright primary colours," said Prince Obolensky, "they smiled and exclaimed, 'How Russian!'

As a matter of fact it was Bloomsbury—London. It was what I had seen in London.”

Prince Obolensky, whose birth, fortune, Oxford education, residence in class-conscious England, subsequent Society marriage and success in America, might easily have made a snob, offered a couple of suggestions in striking contrast to those of the less distinguished, struggling, still prejudiced occasional “Countess Xenias,” who felt that a peasant was always a peasant and a Jew simply wasn’t a “Russian” at all. When I asked him about outstanding Russians in America he mentioned, with equal admiration and in the same breath, famous Russian Jews, Gentiles, the David Sarnoffs, Koussevitskys, Heifetzes, Matchabellis, Sikorskys, Severskys, etc., a long list of newspaper-headline names that might have been a *Who’s Who* of Russians of all ethnologies, origins, and complexions—and said as I was leaving, “If you want to know what Russians do in America you mustn’t overlook the Housewreckers’ Union.”

“What Housewreckers’ Union?” I asked him, thinking it might be a joke.

“The big New York one,” he said, “Local 95, I think. It has a membership of a couple of thousand, and is 90 per cent. pure Russian. If you want to write about Russians in America you certainly must go down and see them.”

So I went down to 1517 East 3rd Street, and met a grand gang of people, who all reminded me of Laurence Stallings’ tough railroad engineer from Texas in *What Price Glory*. That bird had been in so many

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wrecks, you remember, that he thought being blown up with dynamite in front-line trenches was a picnic. The secretary of this amazing all-Russian Local 95 is F. Kozloff. I asked him why so many Russians had gone into that queer trade. He said, "There are a lot of jokes about us, of course, to the effect that Russians are no good except as destroyers, but the truth is, the White Russian peasant is strong as an ox and loves danger. Also he is fatalistic like the Oriental. Hardly a week passes," he continued with a cheerful smile, "that somebody doesn't break his leg—or his neck. They love it. It keeps the work from being dull." The union has among its members a few cultured intellectuals who amuse themselves flirting with death, and a couple of daring Jews, doubtless descended from the Maccabees—but nine-tenths of the housewreckers to be seen leaping out from under crashing tons of stone and steel in New York are White Russian peasants having the time of their fatalistic lives.

This Local holds all its meetings in Russian, and they sound and look like a lot of Red anarchist plotters. As a matter of fact, they are not even radical. They are too busy fighting the laws of gravitation and sudden death to bother about fighting any man-made laws or governments. I don't speak Russian, so this had to be translated for me: A big bearded ruffian, who looked like all the cartoons of all the anarchists, arose and shouted, "Comrades, there is a *reporter* here in this room! What shall be done with him?"

"Let him sit," said the other ruffians blandly. It was more delightful and more completely Russian than any

evening you could spend in the big restaurants where they serve *borsch*, have countesses for cloakroom girls, generals for head waiters, and balalaika orchestras in blouses playing the "Volga Boat Song."

They told me that the window-washers' unions, the ones who wash office and skyscraper windows, were predominantly Russian, too, and they said, "Because it's fun. The belt might always break."

Stopping over in Detroit, on my way to Chicago, I bumped into the fact that a lot of the worst agitation in that periodically labour-strife-torn city is fomented by Russian labour, both Jew and Gentile. The leaders are mostly American, English-speaking stock, but no matter who starts the trouble, or what principles may be involved, or which side may be right or wrong, there are always a few militant, plotting Russian Communists, hidden in the woodpile, eager to incite the smashing of anything American, no matter who comes out on top. I explained candidly at the outset that I make no pretension towards being a professional commentator, analyst, or expert in political and social-economic fields. Hundreds of other books and millions of newspaper columns are being written by technical experts on those subjects. This book is merely about Joe, Mike, Tony, Fritz, Serge, Ladislaus, and Jake, as "people." I almost met one named "Cyril" in Detroit, and the reason I didn't meet him was amusing, since he happened to be that Count Cyril Tolstoi who is related to the late great Count Tolstoi, who hated wealth, turned peasant, and loved the proletariat. Friends had

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invited the Detroit Count Tolstoi and me to luncheon. He had accepted with pleasure, but telephoned at the last minute that he couldn't come—because there had been a flurry in Wall Street! He was glued, with a sandwich, to the ticker and telephone in his office. Count Tolstoi is a stockbroker.

I stopped for a while in Chicago, which has the largest urban Russian element outside New York.<sup>1</sup> The same beautiful Lemmie Carlisle whose Aunt Daisy's flirtation with Paderewski had been my card of introduction to the Poles now transformed herself into a Russian wolfhound, and helped me get my teeth into the local Russian scene by introducing me to Josef Jacovitch Voronka, White Russian despite his Old Testament baptismal names, once minister under Kerensky, twelve years a teacher of Russian in Chicago's schools, and now promoting Russian-American radio programmes

<sup>1</sup> Chicago has 260,000 Russians, three-fourths of whom are Jewish. Ninety per cent. are in the factories and stockyards, many still employed in unskilled hard labour. They are to be found by the thousands in the steel-mills and iron industries around Gary, in textile mills (as in New England), and in the International Harvester factories. The mass Russians live in thick settlements, in North Landale, where they compose 46 per cent. of the entire population, scattering more thinly into Riverdale, Albany Park, Hyde Park. They are most noticeable along Halsted Street, that amazing international thoroughfare which runs all the way across Chicago down to the stockyards, with Turkish, Greek, German, Italian, Polish, Syrian stores, restaurants, signs, tenements, making a horizontal, tumbled-over Tower of Babel. Hull House, of course, is out there, in the centre of the Melting Pot. Lumped with the Russians, in fact, as well as sometimes in statistics, are the Russian-speaking masses who came from countries like Finland, parts of Poland, Lithuania, which are no longer Russian, and also Yugoslavs, Ruthenians, Czechs—ethnological cousins who are related by Slavic blood rather than politics or language.

over station WSBC. Mr Voronka, who was earnest, gay, and looked a little like Kerensky, had organized a Russian-American Radio Club, and invited us to its annual ball and cabaret in a Masonic Temple on North Avenue. So Lemmie dressed up gaily, and we went and were welcome. The dancing was interspersed with entertainment, and we sat beside a Mr Chesley, who turned out to be General Vladimir Chesslavsky, and now runs a Russian-language weekly newspaper. Another general we met was a delightful old gentleman who is a night watchman in the stockyards. There were countesses, baronesses, chauffeurs, waitresses, and a group of young Russians born in America who worked in the steel-mills, had come in boots and blouses as an amateur mandolin orchestra, and played the worst music I have ever heard on earth. They were terrible. A large impressive priest in vestments was Father Timon Mular, of the Russian Cathedral, and there were also present a number of intellectual Russian Jews, both professional and proletarian, who begged me to say that while Russian Jews admittedly are an element in Red radicalism in America, the vast bulk of the 3,000,000 are as good, loyal Americans as anybody, and vote for Roosevelt, or against Roosevelt, or for American Labour Party candidates, without caring what happens to Stalin. I repeat what they told me because I am inclined to believe it is more or less true. While Lemmie danced with the editor of *Dawn*, which is the Chicago anti-Soviet daily, I met and talked with a queer one named Eugene Moravsky, who was seated at the table with some Russian *prima donnas*, and who

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clicked his heels when he stood up, was very military, and glared at me. He is the editor of a paper called *Rassvet*. I thought he must have been at least a Cossack general, but it turned out he had been a philosophic anarchist living in garrets, and is now a good American, anti-Communist. They say he always glares and never smiles. Everybody drank vodka, and I had a glass, thinking this was as good a cross-section of the Russians as I'd ever find. A beautiful Circassian girl, with enormous blue eyes and long golden hair, did fancy ballroom dancing. The queerest editor of any is a gentleman now named Percy who used to be Perzoff. He belongs to the *Mladorossi*, "Young Russia," the group who are Royalists, still Tsarist, though the Tsar is dead. This is the queerest and most hopelessly idealistic little group in America, with branches in New York, Detroit, Cincinnati, Cleveland, and on the West Coast. What makes the *Mladorossi* almost impossible for an outsider to analyse is that, while Tsarist, they are such extreme political "Liberals" that the Tory element among conservative Russians considers them almost to be "Red." Their "pretender" is the Grand Duke Cyril, whose office is in Paris. I saw a current issue of "Mr Percy's" newspaper, with a huge picture of the Grand Duke Cyril on the front page. Under it, which had to be translated for me, was this editorial tone-poem, in pica :

Long sufferers in a far land,  
We ache with grievance  
And dream of the steppes.  
O dear Son, come, we call you,  
Warm our hearts. To you we yearn from exile.



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Come and brighten our hopes.  
Come quickly that our prayers be not in vain.

Romanovs, we pray to you.  
Down with oppression!  
Take us to Russia to struggle.

Beautiful, utterly futile, fantastic, and sad. We will now "sink sat sonks," as Balieff said in *Chauve Souris*.

Another Russian whom I met through Lemmie in Chicago and who is anything but sad or futile is Dr Henry R. Krasnow on 4601 Broadway. He headed the Red Cross drive and Liberty Loan drive among Russian Americans, has been in America for thirty-three years, is Jewish, but a graduate of Loyola College, promotes all things cultural, was a friend of Chaliapin, had personal correspondence with Woodrow Wilson, is a friend of the underdog. He is now helping the W.P.A. assemble material about Russians in America. He said, when I thanked him and asked permission to mention him, "A lot of my friends will think I've turned reactionary. They will be both angry and a little jealous if they see me pleasantly mentioned in the sort of book you seem to be trying to write."

The titled White Russian set-up in Chicago is similar to that in the East except that more of them are still night-watchmen, waiters, waitresses, chauffeurs. Prince Rotislav, whose mother was a sister of the Tsar, is an expert accountant, and the Princess Rotislav, who was a Galitzine, as already mentioned, runs a dress-shop on Michigan Avenue. Prince Nicholas Galitzine is a salesman for the Edison Company. Few, if any, of these White Russian aristocrats are loafers or play-

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boys, not even those who have married rich. While many Georgian and Caucasian families are of ancient noble lineage, there is a whole category of "princes" whose titles, while in no sense spurious like "Prince Mike's," meant no more in Tsarist Russia than "Kentucky Colonels" titles mean in America. At most, when they meant anything, they meant "Esquire," landed gentry.

Since Boris Anisfeld and Nicolas Remisoff, internationally famous for painting ballet and stage sets, both live in or near Chicago, this may be a good spot to mention Russians on the stage and in the various fields of art and science. The list centring in Chicago and New York but scattering all the way to Hollywood and back is amazingly large.

There is Soudeikine, of course, who created the "colourist" movement in modern art and revolutionized stage *décor* at the Metropolitan Opera, Guild Theatre, Jewish Art Theatre, and hangs in most of the big museums. Alajalov, whose things you see continually in *The New Yorker* and other smart magazines, is going in also now for murals in night clubs and hotels. Boris Artzibashef is a new star in book illustration; Nicholas Roerich, who founded his museum in a skyscraper, 310 Riverside Drive, to house the pictures he painted in Asia, India, and the Arctic, became, of course, a "national institution." America now claims Archipenko, one of the world's most famous modernists in attenuated wood sculpture. Prince Paul Troubetskoi is famous for his portrait busts. Sorin is a fashionable portrait-painter who gets big money for his canvases.

Peter Blume is one of America's leading modernists, and Americans are as proud of Zorach, who did the figures for the new Post Office and Department of Justice buildings in Washington, as of any living American sculptor. They were all born in Russia, and there are at least half a hundred more, both Jewish and Gentile, nationally important in art.

In the field of music America is now the adopted home of a hundred famous ones, including Igor Stravinsky and Serge Rachmaninoff. Irving Berlin was born in Russia. Gershwin was a Slavic Jew, born in Brooklyn. Eddie Cantor, incidentally, is of Russian-Jewish origin. Russian-American conductors include Koussevitsky, of the Boston Symphony, Alexander Smallens, of the Chicago Opera, Paul Stassevitch, whose modern and classic conducting in Town Hall have been outstanding, and a dozen others. There are at least a dozen world-famous violinists in the Russian-American group, of whom the best known are perhaps Heifetz, Zimbalist, and Mischa Elman, and Yehudi Menuhin. Rubinoff and his violin are Russian, and so is Vernon Duke, who was born Dukelski.

If Russians owe Americans a debt of gratitude for harbouring them, America certainly owes them a debt for the richness and colour they have contributed to American life. A former schoolmate and Hudson Valley neighbour of mine named Max Eastman is married to Eliena Krylenko, whose brother is Soviet Commissar for Justice Nikolai Vasilyevich Krylenko, over there with the Stalinists. Max, as everybody knows, is a Trotskyist and writer, while his wife, who

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keeps her own name, is a Stalinist and painter. When Max writes books about poetry and laughter, and Eliena paints pictures, politics sometimes doesn't enter into the design at all. She used to paint only easel pictures, portraits mostly, but in 1937 a Croton Negro house-painter named Offie Edward Cherry, who had painted the Eastmans' house, gave Eliena the idea that walls might be nice to paint. She got her hand in by doing a gay mural in Charlie Briaur's bar at Ossining, and in the autumn did the walls of the Star of Bethlehem Negro Baptist Church. Her *Sermon on the Mount* and *Crucifixion* are as vivid in primary orange, green, purple, red, and yellow as anything Soudeikine and Remisoff did for *Chauve-Souris*—and what I think may be significantly Russian-American about it is that Russians of all sorts, high and low, all over the country, in all sorts of odd and out-of-the-way places which never get into the newspapers or a book, as this episode happens to, are contributing more brightness, colour, and life to casual folk-art than any race ever has except the African Negro.

Many outstanding Russian Americans were brought to America as children a long generation ago. One of these was Morris Gest, of the Century Theatre, who was educated in Boston. One was Hurok, the tour manager, who came to America back in 1906. So are numbers of producers on Broadway and some of the biggest producing directors in Hollywood, including Mamoulian, the Warner Brothers, the Schenks, Louis Mayer, of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. People say Cecil DeMille is Russian, but I've been unable to confirm it.

What America owes Russia in the ballet is practically everything. Adolph Bolm was long ballet master at the Metropolitan. Then came Fokine, who had been ballet master of the Imperial Ballet in St Petersburg, and the names of Chalif, Mordkin, Pavlova, Fokina, Diaghaleff, have re-echoed round the world from America. Nazimova, Petrova, Fania Marinoff, and fifty others are famous names on the American stage. Russians are spread all over the dial, on the big broadcasting networks, including "Harmonica" Minnevitch, who is a Russian, even though his *Harmonica Rascals* are mostly American. There are almost as many Russian-American authors and writers as there are musicians, and three times as many Russian scientists, physicists, technical engineers, both Russian Jewish and Russian Gentile, scattered through nearly all the leading American universities and big industrial research laboratories.<sup>1</sup>

As for Hollywood, whose dramas most of us follow more closely than we do the dramas of biology and bio-chemistry, I found when I happened to be out there recently that it is, among other things, a "Russian Colony." Production is more or less in the hands of Jewish Americans of whom more than their names might casually indicate to be Russian. In addition to obviously Russian stars, including Gregory Ratoff,

<sup>1</sup> In the field of applied science great Russian-American names which the man in the street seldom hears include Zvorikin, who is working on television; Zorochinzeff, who invented "system Z" in refrigeration; Vladimir Ipatieff, who invented the high-pressure petrol known as "polymer," for military purposes; Ivan Ostromislensky, who invented mercurochrome. The American *Who's Who* lists several hundred Russian-American scientists, physicists, doctors, famed in their respective fields.

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Tamiroff, and a lot of other "offs" on and off the screen, there are a thousand whose names you sometimes see and sometimes don't, and if you did would never recognize as Russian; former generals who sometimes star and sometimes work as extras; Russian girls who sometimes call themselves Kitty O'Reilly, and a lot of supers whose names you never hear, in pictures like *The General Died at Dawn*.<sup>1</sup>

I went to Cleveland to get a few final impressions of Russians in America, because it has the largest urban Russian group outside New York and Chicago, and because all the foreign-language race groups in Cleveland are perhaps given a better break and better understood than in any other big American city. I called on Theodore Andrica, who runs a Melting Pot column in the *Cleveland Daily Press*, and one of the things he pointed out insistently was that vast numbers of the so-called Russians in America are no longer, properly speaking, Russians at all. He said that a little while back the Czechs, Slovaks, and Carpatho-Russians had given a greater welcome in Cleveland to Vladimir

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Hollywood group in the Far West and "Russian Hill," which is the Russian settlement in San Francisco, there are more than 100,000 Russians in railroad, agricultural, and mining work on the Pacific coast and the Rocky Mountain states, and there is an important large colony of Russian Stundist (Baptist) farmers who have settled in North Dakota around a town which they have named Kiev. They are an offshoot of the Stundist colony which emigrated to Virginia in 1894, and still has a farm colony there. The Dakota colony, composed of about ten thousand to-day, is probably the most prosperous Russian agricultural group apart from the market gardeners on Long Island. Other farm colonies are in Ohio and the Lake states, with smaller ones scattered through Pennsylvania and New England.

S. Hurban, new Minister from Czechoslovakia, than they would ever give to envoys of the late Tsar or the U.S.S.R. And there are forty Ukrainian organizations, some Labour and Radical in Cleveland, composing close on 15,000 men and women, who say, "I am Ukrainian," rather than, "I am Russian." The pure Russian local organizations, the American Russian National Brotherhood, for instance, headed by Joseph Hadvabny, are actually smaller. What holds them all together is that they are nearly all Greek Orthodox, and go to one of the seven Greek Orthodox churches or to the big Russian Cathedral, whose dean is the Very Reverend F. Jason Kappanadze. I met him, and felt very much as if I had met God, because he looks like William Blake's pictures of Jehovah. He was a schoolmate of Stalin's. The two once attended the same theological seminary in Tiflis. He still does the Liturgy in Russian at the Cathedral, and just about the best music you can hear in Cleveland is the singing of that choir, composed mostly of girls who work in ten-cent stores and men who work in the big factories.

Apropos of Andrica's point that lots of Russians are no longer Russian since the World War changed the map of Europe, the prettiest Russian girl I met in Cleveland turned out to be a Pole, though her name was Marie Matuschka, and her grandfather was a Russian subject when he ran away to escape from the Russians. Her grandfather had made a complete job of it, married a German girl in America, turned Lutheran, and his son Otto had become an American doctor in Pittsburg, Kansas. Marie Matuschka went to

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college in Pittsburg, then studied dietetics in the Lakeside Hospital of Cleveland University, and when I was introduced to her as a typical "beautiful Russian" she told me all these Melting Pot details with a smile. To cap them, I found that she was running the Home Economics Department for one of the big refrigerator companies, teaching American housewives how to be American! I said, "Marie, you're not Russian; you're the Melting Pot personified. You ought to pose for pictures, dancing on top of the Melting Pot."

About a third of the Russians in Cleveland are Jewish, including a taxi-driver named Arthur Wohl who ran up so big a figure on his meter when we went out Superior Avenue to the Jewish section that he refused to accept a tip, but let me buy him lunch instead.

"Papa," he said, "was born in Russia and was a tailor and was kicked around and didn't like it, and came to New York and was still a tailor, and wasn't kicked around so much, but still didn't like it. I pressed pants when I was a kid, and didn't like it either. I went way out West to Montana, tried a pick and shovel along the Columbia river, and I didn't like it much, though it's the most beautiful scenery in the world. Then I came to Cleveland and started driving taxis, and sent for Papa and Mamma, and we all like it fine. All of us Jews like it in Cleveland."

I said, "Why do you like it?"

He said, "Come along and I'll show you why. I'll show you where Mamma lives."

It was a Jewish section, 118th Street, I think, off Superior, and there was space between the houses, and



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there were trees growing. Mamma was rocking on the front porch, in a Jewish shawl, and was glad to see us and gave us coffee, and a lot of kids were playing in the street, talking Russian and Yiddish. They were at home there in their own America and liked it.

In that street, sitting on the porch with Arthur Wohl and his mamma, I got the deepest feeling that America, despite quarrels, racial prejudices, and bitterness, labour agitations, and all the mess of the depression, has been pretty decent on the whole to foreign-language immigrants of all races, creeds, and complexions who have come to her shores for sanctuary or to begin life anew. The Melting Pot is a real thing, I think. It boils and bubbles. It gives off a lot of steam and some scum, but what remains is a good conglomerate. Arthur and I and the Swedes, wops, Poles, Heinies, grand duchesses, and Jewish tailors are Americans all—now all in the same boat—now moving towards a common destiny, in which, please God, our freedom “shall not perish from the earth.”



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